

LOMAI OF LENAHEL

✧ A · HERO · OF · THE ✧
NEW · HEBRIDES

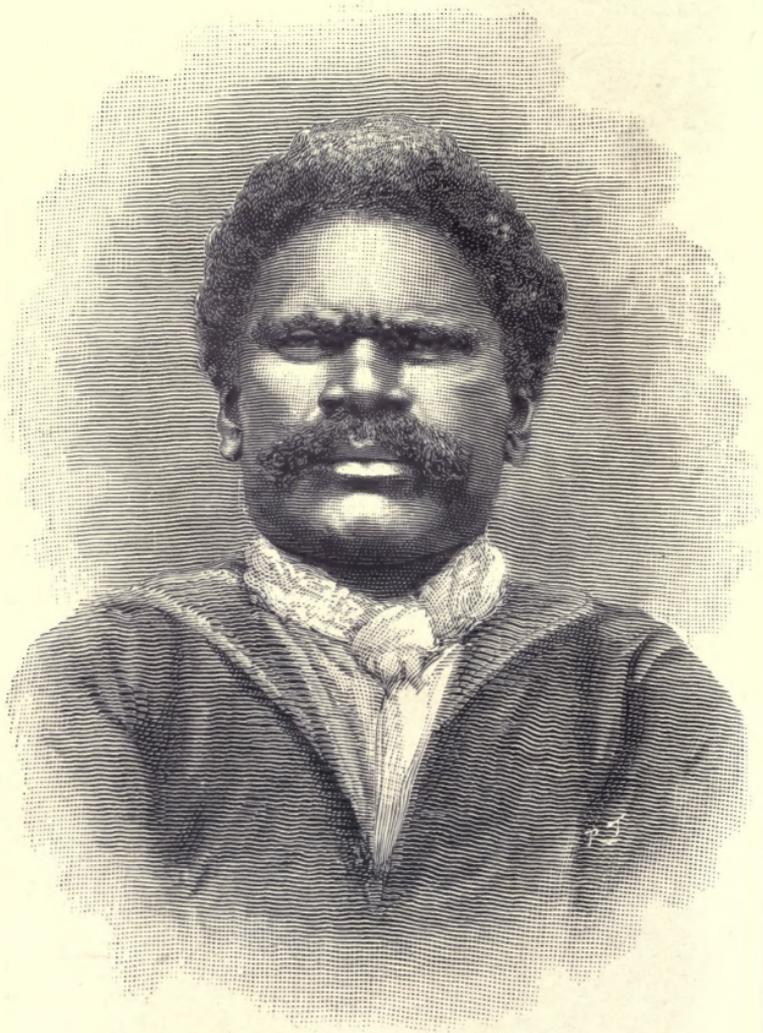
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L OMAI OF LENA K E L

A HERO OF THE NEW
HEBRIDES. A FRESH CHAPTER
IN THE TRIUMPH OF THE GOSPEL. By
FRANK H. L. PATON, B.D., for six years Resident
Missionary on the West Coast of Tanna. Illustrated

LONDON: HODDER AND

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PATERNOSTER ROW 1903

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To the
COMMITTEE OF THE JOHN G. PATON MISSION FUND
IN GRATEFUL RECOGNITION OF
THEIR ABUNDANT AND SELF-DENYING LABOURS
ON BEHALF OF THE NEW HEBRIDES

PREFACE

By JAMES PATON, D.D.

MY share in this book has been limited to the revising of the proof-sheets, as they were passing through the press.

The literary grace of the style, and the spiritual fascination of the contents, we owe entirely to the gifted and devoted Author.

When, in January 1889, I launched upon the world the *Autobiography* of his Venerable Father John G. Paton, my apology was thus expressed—“ I publish it, because Something tells me there is a blessing in it.” The results have amply vindicated the grounds of that decision.

In venturing now to publish this book, by his like-minded son,—*The Story of the Planting of the Kingdom of God on West Tanna*—my apology is, that nowhere else in all the world, within recent times, have I been able to discover, nor do I believe that there can be found, a more direct and irresistible demonstration of the supernatural origin of the Word of God, and the miraculous effects of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

This little book goes forth, therefore, as a living

and unanswerable proof—entitled to be characterised as “historic” and “scientific,” because it proceeds on the basis of unassailable fact, and is wrought out in the light of undoubted experience—that the Word of God revealed in the Holy Bible, and the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ proclaimed by men and women who believe it and live under its power, can transform semi-brutalized and almost demonized Cannibals, of the worst and lowest type on the face of this Earth, into Saints and Heroes, such as those who live and move before us in the following pages; many of them gladly hazarding their lives daily for the Name of the Lord Jesus, and not a few of them victoriously enrolled already in the Noble Army of the Martyrs.

We argue, fearlessly, that what has been done in the Haunts of Savagery can be done in the Slums of Civilization; and our further contention is—that the results thus obtained, on the line of Moral, Social, and Spiritual Progress, could be achieved through no other power or influence known to the human mind, save only through the revealed Word of God and the glorious Gospel of His blessed Son.

Readers of the last Chapter, with its apparent wreck of health and failure of life-work, will be gratified to learn that, though the Author has been precluded from the hope of again residing on

Tanna, yet, in less than twelve months, God has opened for him another door of usefulness, and in a most congenial sphere. At the call of the Federated Presbyterian Church of the Commonwealth of Australia, he has undertaken—if strength be confirmed—to visit and address all their Congregations ; in the hope that the story of his experience may kindle everywhere a deeper interest in, and create a more generous enthusiasm for, all the Foreign Mission Enterprises of the Kingdom of God. Thus—as in many a noble instance in the past—mysterious sufferings, apparent disaster, and the heart-breaking burial of cherished hopes, may be but the pathway to the fulfilling of greater and better things than the sufferers had ever dreamed to accomplish.

To God be all the Glory !

GLASGOW, *February* 1903

N.B.—All proper Names to be pronounced phonetically—every letter at its full value, and all vowels with the broad Italian sound : thus, e.g.—

Lomai = Lo-máh-ee.

Lenakel = Le-nák-el.

Seimata = Say-ee-máh-ta.

Loinio = Lo-é-nee-o.

Numanian = Noo-máh-nee-an.

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Mission House ANIWA I.



CHAPTER I

LANDING AMONG SAVAGES

TOWARDS dark on the 12th of May 1896, the little *Dayspring* weighed anchor at Futuna, and steamed away for Tanna. After evening worship we gathered on the deck, our hearts full of thoughts of the morrow. Futuna gradually faded into the darkness behind us, while far before us a dull red glow from the volcano marked the south-east point of Tanna. A solemn hush fell upon us, and Mr Smaill of Epi proposed that we should have a time of special prayer for Tanna and the work of the coming day. It was a quiet and helpful hour as we laid all our hopes and fears and plans before Him in whose name we were going forth. We all felt that God was very near to us that night on the deck of our little ship, and we felt that He would enable us to do and endure anything.

At daylight we anchored off Port Resolution, where Turner and Nisbet landed so long ago, and where my father worked until he was driven out by the fury of the savages. Here we picked up Mr Watt, who has so heroically done battle with

the Heathenism of Tanna ; and then we steamed on along the south coast to Kwamera, the early home of Mr and Mrs Watt. We did not stay long here, but pressed on up the west coast. The scenery was lovely : now a white fringe of sand, now a bold and rocky headland, and always a background of magnificent mountains clothed to the very top with luxuriant vegetation.

At 4.30 P.M. we dropped anchor in a little bay with a white beach, and many thoughts came crowding upon us as we wondered if this lovely spot was to be the scene of our future home and work. The boat was soon lowered, and in a few minutes we were pulling in between the ugly rocks that guard the entrance to the Lenakel boat passage. A tall, military-looking Englishman in white came forward to receive us, and in the background stood a small group of fully armed and naked savages. The Englishman we found to be Mr A. H. Worthington, planter and trader, and he led us through the scrub to his house which was finely situated on the north side of the bay. Here we were welcomed by Mrs Worthington, who shared with her husband the privation and loneliness of life in the South Seas.

But before going up to the house we sought to make friends with our dusky brothers of Tanna, who stood in a row curiously watching our landing. As my wife and I went up to them they shrank

back, but our smiles reassured them, and they shook hands, grinning broadly. But further than that they would not go, and when we asked them if they wanted a Missionary, they were dour and silent. At last they said that they were not Chiefs and could give no consent, and that if they did they would be killed. This was not promising, but we arranged with them to bring the Chiefs down next morning for a conference; and after some talk with the Worthingtons we pulled back to the ship to spend a night of much prayer and thought.

The next morning we were ashore before breakfast, but the Chiefs had not yet come; and, from the attitude of the natives who had gathered, some of the most experienced of the Missionaries thought there was little hope of a settlement. We waited for a while, and then pulled back to the ship for breakfast. We were somewhat cast down, but we lifted our hearts to God in prayer, assured that if He wished us to settle at Lenakel He would open up the way.

By the time breakfast was over we could see a large crowd of men and women on the beach, so we again pulled ashore. By this time one of the leading Chiefs had arrived upon the scene. He was a splendid specimen of a savage, very tall, with immense shoulders and limbs. He was dressed in Tanna fashion, which is not to be described; and, as if he did not think himself

dark enough already, he had painted both his cheeks jet black. Around him were his advisers and warriors, all fiercely painted and armed with loaded guns. Some were painted bright yellow and vermilion, others had cheeks, nose, chin, and forehead all different colours. They did not look at all an inviting crowd, as they sat and glared at us.

When I tried to make friends with Iuiap, the Chief, he refused to have anything to do with us, but said with a lordly wave of his arm—

“Me talk Tanna first.”

After consulting with his people, he went and had an interview with Mr Worthington. Then he came back, and with great strides stalked down nearly to the water's edge. There he turned and stood erect and motionless, eyeing his people with an imperial air. Three of his under Chiefs then arose and joined him, and the four of them squatted on the sand and had a long talk. It was a momentous conference, and while the Heathen talked we Missionaries lifted up our hearts to God, for we knew that on the result of that talk, humanly speaking, depended the whole question of a settlement. It seemed to me as if these four men were deciding the eternal destiny of their people, so far as that lay in their own hands.

At last Iuiap arose and came towards us. I

at once went to meet him, and asked him if he had decided for a Missionary, but he said with great dignity—

“No, no, me talk Tanna first.”

I asked if he himself was willing, but he would not commit himself, and put an end to the conversation by saying, with a regal haughtiness, “Suppose me like Missionary, me tell you ; suppose me no like Missionary, me tell you.”

Iuiap then harangued his people. Instantly a change came over the whole scene. Sour looks gave way to smiles, and an under Chief beckoned to us to follow him to see some land which they were willing to sell. A young girl came running forward and seized Mrs Paton’s hand and led her along the track, turning round every now and then to give her a reassuring nod. God had answered our prayers, and we thanked Him for so inclining the people’s hearts to let us land among them.

Now began the anxious work of selecting the best site. The ground the natives showed us was rather far from the boat landing, and they wanted too much for it. Mr Worthington kindly offered us a piece right on the beach, and most of the Missionaries were in favour of accepting his offer. Then a short, thick-set man of magnificent proportions came forward for the first time, and asked us to look at a piece of

land to the south of the bay. He had long, shaggy hair and a bushy beard, and one expected to hear a voice like a lion's roar; but his voice was strikingly gentle, and his sweet smile belied his whole appearance. We followed him along the shore for nearly a mile, wondering all the time at his splendid frame. There was strength and grace in every movement. But we were sorry to disappoint him, for his ground was too far from the landing. This naked Heathen was Lomai, the central figure in the narrative that is to follow.

From Lenakel we steamed to Loanatit on the north-west of Tanna to see if we could obtain a settlement for Dr Sandilands. The natives were friendly, but decidedly rejected all proposals that a Missionary should live amongst them. Their invariable reply to all advances was—

“Me fellow want copra man, me fellow no want Missionary.”

The population also seemed very thin and scattered, so we weighed anchor and proceeded on our voyage through the group to gather the Missionaries and bring them to Aneityum for Synod.

One morning at daylight we steamed into South West Bay, Malekula, just as H.M.S. *Royalist* was weighing anchor to come out. On the shore we could see two lonely white figures.

They were my brother and Mr Boyd. Four of us jumped into a boat, and a quarter of an hour's pulling brought us to the landing, where my brother and I gripped hands after years of separation.

The Synod meeting was a happy time and much important work was done. When it was over, we steamed to Weasisi and landed the Rev. Thomson Macmillan, who was to take up Mr Gray's work on East Tanna. Then we crossed over to Aniwa, my birth-place, to ask for teachers. My father addressed the natives and called for volunteers for Lenakel. Titonga and Tausi at once agreed to come. Both were my playfellows in boyhood, and they had now grown into fine, true men of God. Titonga's wife was Litsi. She was my mother's first girl and nursed me as a baby. Litsi had already done years of noble service, but she once more left her native isle at the call of Christ. Seimata, Tausi's wife, was a much younger woman, and she also proved a beautiful soul.

With such splendid helpers we made our way joyfully across to Tanna. Our first point of call was Loanbakel. As soon as the boat was lowered, the *Dayspring* steamed on to find an anchorage, while some of us pulled ashore to see Mr Forlong, a Christian trader who spends most of his time evangelising. Mr Forlong gave us much infor-

mation about North Tanna, and we were delighted with what we saw of his work. We then sailed after the *Dayspring* to where she had anchored for the night.

The next morning was the Sabbath and we pulled ashore to hold services. But we found no landing in the bay, so we pulled as near the rocks as we could and then shouted. At first there was no response; but after some time a woman appeared and told us that the men had all gone away to a club fight. As soon as she had made this announcement she bolted, and not another soul was to be seen.

In the afternoon we pulled a mile or two along the coast to the south. We found a few men at a place called Nalebot, and we landed and had a talk with them. But they listened as those who don't quite know what to make of it.

There seemed to be no suitable opening for a mission station on North Tanna, so Dr Sandilands decided to go to Santo in accordance with Synod's advice. It was a keen disappointment to us, for a medical man was sorely needed on Tanna.

At daybreak next morning, June 15th, we arrived at Lenakel, and the work of landing our house began without delay. Great crowds of armed men and not a few women and children looked on, and showed a much more friendly spirit than on our first visit. We had no difficulty

in getting the men to work at the usual rate of tenpence a day. Our first business was to clear a bit of land on which to place the timber, well above high water mark, to dry. The natives then carried it up from the beach, while the rest of us got our camp fixed up. Mr Worthington very kindly allowed us to pitch our tents on a corner of his coffee clearing, and gave us the use of a shed and copra house. We walled in the cop-shed with corrugated iron, and partitioned it off into dining-room and kitchen, while for sleeping quarters we had two tents. Our boxes and provisions we stored in the copra hut. Very soon our snug little camp was completed, and for the first six weeks this was all the home we had.

Our great difficulty was to keep my father from overworking. He was like a school-boy let loose among his dear Tannese, and insisted on lifting the heaviest burdens. When we stopped him from carrying timber, he seized an axe and began to clear the ground. When we got the axe away from him, he found a spade and began to grub out trees. At last we thought we had got every tool out of his reach, when we suddenly missed him. After some searching I found him in an out-of-the-way corner hacking away at the scrub with a long knife, the perspiration pouring down his face, and chuckling with delight at having evaded his unworthy sons! On each

side of him was a dusky Tanna woman inspired by his example to join him in the work. I brought him back in triumph, and he complained bitterly that we would not let him do anything at all, and this after he had done enough work for half-a-dozen men of his age!

Things went on very happily with so many willing helpers, and in two days and a half all our timber and belongings were landed, including our three goats and two dogs, Fritz and Laddie. Then we pulled out to the *Dayspring*, and had dinner together for the last time. It was decided that Mr Kenneth M'Kenzie, ship's carpenter and brother of the Rev. J. Noble M'Kenzie of Santo, should remain with us for two months to help in the building of our house. The good-byes were hard, but our hearts were full of thankfulness to God for His goodness. As the *Dayspring* weighed anchor, we went down the side into our good boat *Pioneer*. Little was said as we pulled back to Lenakel, for we were now alone with great responsibilities. And yet God was with us, and in Him was our confidence.

CHAPTER II

FEELING OUR WAY

AS the *Dayspring* steamed out, H.M.S. *Royalist* dropped anchor in the bay. Captain Rason at once came ashore, and we were delighted to welcome Her Majesty's representative in these seas as our first visitor in our new home. His visit had a great effect upon the natives, who looked on from a respectful distance, quite prepared to take to their heels should the captain show any signs of becoming dangerous.

As soon as the captain left, we set to work in real earnest to get our ground cleared. We went over it carefully, and then decided upon a site for the house. A gang of Tanna men helped us to clear it, while another gang carried up the timber from the beach. When the site was cleared, Mr Hume and some natives cut down huge trees and sawed them into lengths for foundation stumps, while Mr M'Kenzie and I sank them into the ground.

While we worked at the building, Mrs Paton took charge at the camp. From early morning till late afternoon, men and women came to her

with yams, bananas, oranges, shells, cats, sugarcane and all kinds of articles for sale. One day a band of armed men came to the camp, and the leader deposited a large yam, for which he demanded five shillings. As the yam was only worth sixpence, my wife offered him that amount. The man looked very indignant and said—

“No, very good you give me five shillings.”

My wife replied, “No, suppose you no want sixpence, you take yam belong you, I keep sixpence.”

But it was a long way to carry the yam back, and the sixpence looked very bright, so the savage gave in. This gentle firmness in the beginning saved endless trouble; and the natives soon got to know that when we said a thing we meant it.

A man called Tom was the leader of our gang of Tanna workers. He could speak the usual South Sea “pigeon” English, and he acted as our foreman. The men worked well as a rule when we were watching them, but we had some difficulty at first in getting them to keep long enough at it. They would saunter down about nine o’clock in the morning, and decamp about three in the afternoon. But by insisting upon it we got them to work from 8 A.M. to 4 P.M., with an hour’s interval for dinner. They also showed some disposition at first to strike for higher

wages, but kindness and firmness overcame all obstacles, and the work went on happily.

There were plenty of natives about all day till 4 P.M., but after that not a native was to be seen. The villages were all a mile or more inland, and at sundown the men met in the public square to drink kava. This is the name of a shrub, and from it they prepare what they call their "grog belong Tanna." They dig up the root of the kava, and the boys chew it and spit the juice into a small wooden vessel shaped like a canoe. This is mixed with water, and the drug is then ready for use. It is drunk only at sundown, and no woman is allowed to enter the square while this rite is being indulged in. Nor is anyone allowed to talk, else the spell is broken and the kava spirits take wing. In every village square there is a small hut, in which the kava bowls are kept. It is the general lounging place of the men during the day, while in the evening it is sacred to the kava ceremony. Many a fiendish plot is hatched in these wretched kava houses. The effect of the kava upon the men is to make them dull and stupid. Hence the favourite time for attacking a village is just after sundown, while the men are still heavy with the drug.

Our foreman, Tom, was a most interesting character. He had been in Queensland, and

there he had learned something about Jesus. Then he came back to his people and tried to teach them all he knew. But the darkness of Heathenism was too much for him, and his own light flickered and died. Still he longed for better things, and one day he sent a scrap of paper to Mr Gray at Weasisi, asking for a Missionary. The paper reached its destination, though it was long before Mr Gray could make out where it came from. At last he found out who Tom was, and visited him, to his no small delight. Tom built him a house, and made a new start with his teaching. But, after Mr Gray left Tanna, Tom again sank back into Heathen darkness. But Mr Gray's visit had convinced him that Lenakel was a good opening for a Mission Station, and in due time Tom's earnest longing became an accomplished fact. Tom was a pathetic figure, and for a time he was our chief helper. He had taught his people that beautiful little hymn, "Jesus loves me"; and sometimes we would hear a wild, painted savage singing it as he worked, absolutely unconscious of the meaning of a single word of it.

I shall never forget Tom's sad look, the first Sabbath, when he brought his villagers almost to the Mission camp, and they suddenly deserted and fled. He sat on a stump and said—

"Me take piccanninni by hand and come close

up, but they fright and run away. Me plenty sorry they no come."

Our first congregation consisted of four Tannese, Tom and his wife, Ielo, Iesua, a bright-faced eager girl, and little Iauilam. It was a day of small beginnings ; but even for these we thanked God.

The next Sabbath I told Tom that we would go up to his village. Tom's eyes gleamed with delight, and then he said shrewdly—

"Very good you tell me one fellow. Suppose you tell altogether, he fright, he run away."

We followed Tom's advice, and took his village by surprise. It was a lovely climb of two miles through dense bush, the path running between two banks of exquisite ferns. As we neared the village our approach was heralded by the yelping of dogs, the squealing of pigs, and the general stampede of nearly the whole village, the humans adding lustily to the chorus of yells. Tom smiled good-naturedly, and gathered ten others around us, while we showed them pictures, and explained them in "pigeon" English. Our teachers translated into Eastern Tannese ; and Tom explained in his own language the points not easily understood by the rest. Occasionally we would see a face peep out from behind a tree in the distance, and from various directions we could hear excited whisperings.

In the afternoon, we went along the beach

seeking for audiences. There were plenty of people, but they generally decamped as soon as they saw us coming. The Sacred men had told them that they would die if they listened to the Worship, and hence their special fear of us on the Sabbath. On week days they came about us freely, for they could then make something out of us, and the Sacred men quite approved of that. But when it came to a question of holding a service, they bolted in real terror.

One afternoon, we saw a fine-looking man sitting on the beach with his loaded rifle across his knees. He was tall and splendidly formed, with good features and a long flowing beard. His only adornment was a single spot of yellow paint on each cheek. We proposed to show him some pictures, and with a pleasant smile he rose and said—

“You come, we go look some more man,”—and then he walked along with a kingly grace. He tried to collect one or two others, but in vain; so we showed him the pictures, and preached the Gospel to him in broken English. He was most polite, and smiled his thanks. We found out that this was Iavis, the great war Chief of the Loinio tribe; and a man of truer natural dignity I never saw. We thought that we had done a poor afternoon’s work with only one listener; but, had we known it, that one was to become a

mighty force in the land, a hero for God and his fellows.

On the morning of the third Sabbath at Lenakel, we followed a track which led inland to the south of our camp. A mile's climbing along a good road that ran between two dense walls of reeds brought us to a large public square ; but as no one was about, and we could see no houses, we passed on. The track now ran along a narrow ridge, with magnificent gullies on either side. The trees were festooned with creepers, and the colouring of the whole was brilliant. Suddenly the track glided into a great open space. On one side was a far-spreading banyan tree, from the roots of which we could see right down the valley away to the calm sea beyond. On the other side was a fine guava tree, and near it stood a kava house. Sitting on a stone beside the house was a wild-looking Tanna man, whom we did not at first recognise.

"Plenty hot to-day," I said, in the usual "pigeon" English.

"Yes, it is very warm," was the answer in gentle accents, and with a winsome smile that quite transformed his face. It was Lomai, who had been so anxious that we should settle on his ground, and who evidently bore us no grudge for choosing a rival site. I asked him to guide us to the next village, and he at once led the way inland. Again, as he

walked along, we were lost in admiration of his graceful strength. Another mile through forest country brought us to a small village, where we saw an old man sitting under the shade of his banyan tree. I asked him to come along to the next village, and he answered with an emphatic "No." But to my surprise he got up and followed us. I afterwards discovered that "No" was the only English word he knew, and that he used it to express any answer, sublimely unconscious of its meaning!

The next village was a very large and important one. We were delighted to find that it was the home of Iavis, the Loinio war Chief. He came forward and received us graciously, his cheeks adorned as usual with their spot of yellow paint. He led us to his banyan tree, and invited us to be seated on a fallen branch. We found that Iavis and Lomai were close friends, the two leaders of a very large tribe, and I never saw a finer pair of men anywhere. A few people gathered round us, and we sang to them and showed a picture roll. Iavis and Lomai translated between them, and then we prayed that God would lead these men into the light. We little knew at the time that these two Heathen leaders were to become the most potent forces under God in the conversion of their fellows.

On the way home a woman met us at the first public square through which we had passed in the morning. She could speak no English, but she beckoned to us to follow her along a track which led to the south. After a little hesitation we followed, wondering what she wanted. In a few seconds we found ourselves in the midst of a cluster of houses. Outside one of these sat a pleasant-featured man, with long hair plaited Tanna fashion. He was evidently in great pain, and we found that he was suffering from pneumonia. He was the husband of the woman who had brought us to see him. He had a long illness, but by constant attention and with God's blessing we pulled him through. He was very grateful, and promised that if he got well he would come to school, and try to get his people to do so also. And Nalbini, for that was his name, was true to his promise, and became one of our most devoted helpers.

On the fourth Sabbath we decided to visit Iuiap's tribe. We had no guides, but we knew that his village lay to the north of our camp, so we followed a track leading in that direction. The first mile was up the bed of a dry creek. The banks were one mass of the most lovely ferns, and the vegetation around was so thick that the air was quite cold. Then we climbed up a very steep hill, the roots of the trees forming a

natural staircase. After about a mile's climbing and half a mile along the ridge we came to a large village, where the people were fiercely painted. Our reception was very mixed. The women and children bolted with howls of terror, dogs and pigs yelping and squealing in sympathy. The older men frowned savagely at us, and shook their heads when we approached them, but the younger men gathered round us in a friendly way. One of these was the ugliest and most repulsive man I ever saw ; and his appearance was not improved by the thick layer of red and black paint which covered his face. We sang a hymn and then unfolded our picture roll. The old men stood at a distance scowling ; but as picture after picture was unfolded they were quite unconsciously drawn right up to the little circle that surrounded us. As soon as the service was over, they realised where they were and ran back in great disgust, to the immense delight of the younger men.

We found that this was not Iuiap's village which was on the ridge across the gully. We then went down a very steep track, along the bed of a watercourse, to the bottom of the gully several hundred feet below. Then we climbed up the other side which was not quite so steep, and very soon came to a large village presided over by Iawak, a fine-looking Tanna Chief with seven

wives. He received us like a gentleman, and gathered his people round us for a service.

A few minutes' more, walking brought us to Iuiap's village. The old Chief was sick in bed, but he was very pleased to see us and seemed to feel honoured by our visit. We had a service in the village square, and then returned by a road that passed near Iuiap's house. We were surprised to see him standing by the path waiting for us. He held out a native mat to Titonga, and when the teacher hesitated to accept it, Iuiap threw it at his feet with a lordly air, as much as to say, "I take no denial." Then he turned to me, and put a two shilling piece into my hand. I was about to return it with warm thanks for his kindness, when he said solemnly—

"You come house belong me, I give you this." And then he marched back to bed. Good old Iuiap! That was the first contribution to our Tanna Church, and I kept it for the new building.

CHAPTER III

PROGRESS AND OPPOSITION

FOR some time we did not see much of Lomai. He was friendly when we met, but otherwise he kept away from us. One day, however, he came to our camp carrying his little baby. He was in a great state, for his only child was ill, and he was afraid it would die. I found that little Iolu was suffering from a suppurating ear, and I told Lomai to bring him down every day for treatment. For about two weeks after this he was a daily visitor, and a great friendship sprang up between us. Lomai was different from all the rest; he was so sympathetic, and so quick to respond and understand. As his child grew better, he could not do enough to show his gratitude. But still something seemed to be keeping him back, and for a time again we saw very little of him. Sometimes, when I was attending the sick in his tribe, Lomai would come and help me, and his gentleness always impressed me. He was so handy, too, and so helpful in every way. At other times he would come down

with a number of Heathen to interpret for them in bartering ; and when he saw the crowds that always kept Mrs Paton so busy he would say—

“ You very busy, Misis ; I sorry to give you more trouble, but these people want to sell some yam.”

And he always tried to give as little trouble as possible.

Afterwards I found out what was keeping Lomai back. He told me, when he became a Christian, that this was a time of sore struggle and shame with him. He knew that we had come for their sakes, and he knew that the fashion of Tanna was bad, but he was under the influence of the old men. He wanted to come to us and learn, but he was afraid of the rest of the tribe. Shame kept him from breaking away from them, and yet in staying with them shame filled his heart. And this was why he avoided me. Then came Iolu's illness ; and he shook off the influence of the others for a time, but only to be dragged back once more. The Spirit was already beginning to work and he had no rest in the old ways.

Lomai was by no means the only one, who was first attracted to us by medical treatment. One day, Iavis the war Chief came to the camp with a sore chest. Mrs Paton rubbed in some turpentine, and till he was better Iavis came every day for treatment. And so careful was he to do

nothing to hinder his recovery, that he asked Mrs Paton if bathing would do him any harm, and then came back to ask if he was to bathe before or after the medicine was rubbed in. Of course all these comings and goings gave many opportunities of quietly sowing the seed in what proved to be a most receptive heart.

Another day as we were building, a short, burly savage, with long hair plaited as usual in the Tanna mode, and with a very determined jaw, came to me and said—

“Please you give me some medicine.”

I asked what the matter was, and he answered, “Me short wind along night, me no savey lie down.”

I found it to be a case of asthma, and a few doses of iodide of potassium worked wonders. From that time Numanian became our fast friend, though he still continued a determined Heathen and opposed the Worship. When he got better he came to work for us, and for the first few weeks the regular thing was—

“Good morning, Numanian.”

“Good morning,” came the bright answer, and then after a pause, “Please you give me six shilling.”

Five shillings a week was the ordinary wage, and we firmly refused to go higher; and when Numanian saw that we really meant it, he was

quite content, and worked magnificently. It was his nature to do things thoroughly.

Many others, who would have nothing to do with the Worship, came to us for medical treatment, and in this way we gained their confidence. Villages, that were closed to us in every other way, let us in to tend their sick. Especially was this so in the case of children. The Tannese are very fond of their children ; and many a hard heart was softened and even awaked to better things by our tending their little ones in sickness. Again and again we were reminded of the words, " A little child shall lead them." Our one sorrow was that we did not have a fuller medical knowledge. Every missionary in such a field should have at least some years of medical training, the more the better. It is simply invaluable, not only for the joy of relieving pain, but also for the door it opens to the hearts of the people. Through the healing of the body, many a soul has been led to the true Physician.

One day Iesua, the bright-faced girl who came with Tom to our first service, was going about the camp with a very bad thumb. Mrs Paton persuaded her to have it dressed, and in a few days it began to heal. Iesua was amazed at the result, and became a constant visitor, often sitting and watching Mrs Paton at her work for an hour at a time. We could not speak directly to her

for many months, but the seed was sown by degrees and her heart was receptive. In after years, she also became one of the heroic souls of Lenakel, and bore her share of suffering for her Lord.

But, though we made friends with the people, we had great difficulty in getting anything like a regular school set agoing. One day, however, Iavis and Numanian and two others came to Mrs Paton and said—

“Misis, very good you show picture and sing, and me fellow go home.” Mrs Paton called me from the building, and we had a little service. That was the beginning of our regular daily school, and from four the numbers gradually increased till our dining-room was too small to hold the people. And then we had to build a school house.

But, in the meantime, the Heathen talked strenuously against us. The Sacred men worked upon their superstitious fears, and many of the people began to avoid us. They really believed that they would sicken and die, if they came to the Worship. Others discovered that the new teaching clashed with their most cherished sins, and many fell away on that account. Even Tom entered upon a period of reaction, and while he generally came on Sabbaths, we saw very little of him during the week. The old spirit seemed

A SAVAGE TANNA MAN



A WITCH DOCTOR



to master him for the time, and Tom gave himself up to seeking the things of the world. He complained that we did not give him presents for coming to school. But I pointed out to him and the rest, that we had come to give them something far better than this world's goods, and that no one need expect presents from us for coming to the Worship. We had made it a principle of our work, from which we never departed, to offer them no outside attractions, but simply to preach the Gospel and to magnify it as the supreme good in this life as in the next. In this way there was no confusion in their minds as to what we had come for. The results amply justified the principle, and we became convinced that to work on any other would be a disastrous mistake. It also helped to develop an independent spirit among our people, a thing which is sadly lacking in Heathen races. Thus, men, who at first expected payment for coming to school, learned in the end that the obligation was all on their side.

Lomai and Iavis also hung back. As Lomai told me afterwards, he looked on from a distance and was very unhappy. Others not only kept away themselves, but also tried to hinder their people. Lomai's brother forbade his wife to come, and another man took away his children from the school. I went up to see the two men about it, and found Lomai's brother just at death's

door. He was vomiting blood, and thought that his last hour had come. The day after he took ill the favourite child of the other man fell sick, and the father in great fear sent his wife and family to Lomai to bring them to me, as he was afraid to come himself. They both recovered under treatment; and, though the two men remained Heathen to the last, they never again put any hindrance in the way of others coming to the Worship.

About this time I asked Lomai to come down every day and help me to learn the language. He had the best knowledge of English in the whole district, and he was by far the ablest man. He had left Tanna when a boy, and spent thirteen years among English-speaking people in different lands. In Queensland he had received great kindness and teaching from a Mrs Robinson, of whom he often spoke; but bad companions and drink had kept him from becoming a Christian. In his later years in Queensland, he had taken a prominent part in the survey of the Cairns Railway, and in this work he gained much useful experience. On his return to Tanna he at once went back into Heathenism, and his great ability and force of character made him, next to Iavis, the foremost man in his tribe.

When I asked Lomai to come and help me with the language, he at once agreed to do so.

This was the turning-point in his career. After a time he began to interpret for me in Church and school, and this ensured regular attendance. He soon became our best reader and brightest pupil. Then we began to translate some hymns together. The first one was "Jesus loves me," and Lomai's delight knew no bounds when we sang it to him in his own language. When we sang it in school the people first listened mechanically, then their eyes opened wide as if they thought their ears were deceiving them, and finally they looked at each other in startled amazement as they realised that we were singing in their own mother tongue.

But the great formative influence in Lomai's character was the Word of God. As soon as I had got some grip of the language, we began to translate the Gospel of Mark together. Every word of it had to be clearly explained to Lomai, that he might know its Tanna "brother." He became deeply impressed, and as the Gospel story unfolded itself his wonder deepened. At last when he came to the narrative of the sufferings and death of Christ, Lomai exclaimed in horror and amazement—

"Misi, did they really do that to the Son of God?"

We could see the change going on in Lomai's heart, and oh how we prayed over that man that

he might be led to Christ and become a worker for Him among his fellows.

One day Lomai remained after school with Tausi and Titonga, and they read to him out of Mr Watt's translation of the New Testament, explaining as they went along. He listened for several hours, every now and then sighing deeply. When he was gone, Tausi came to me and said with deep emotion—

“Me talk plenty along Lomai, by-and-bye he savey, close up. He here now” (pointing to his throat, and meaning the Word of God), “by-and-bye he come here” (pointing to his heart).

On the 9th November, our new school was finished. It was a native building, with reed walls and a thatch roof, but large enough to hold sixty or seventy people. All that was needed to complete the thing was a bell. But even this was forthcoming, as Tom Tanna very soon made clear, for he and another man came marching into the station one day with a bell hanging from a pole, which they carried between them. Some years ago a steamer, called the *Fijian*, was wrecked at Lenakel, and its belongings were soon seized upon by the savages. Tom secured the bell among other things, and when Mr Gray visited him he sold him the bell. Mr Gray left it in Tom's charge for the Worship, and Tom now handed it over to me for our new Church. We

soon had it hanging on a tree ; and thus our church was fully equipped, and only needed men and women to fill it.

The firm stand now taken by Lomai put courage into many of the weaker ones, and our numbers grew apace. Iavis gradually drew away from the old men, and became more and more whole-hearted in his desire for the Worship. Tom also began to get the old yearning look back into his eyes, and inch by inch he was drawn under the influence of the Gospel.

As we had a good many people working for us on the Station, we made it a rule that workers must attend the daily school which was held in the working hours. All the workers fell in with this rule cheerfully enough, except Numanian. This determined Heathen had constituted himself the leader of the young men who opposed the Worship. He harangued his fellow-workers, and persuaded them to strike against the new rule. When we began school, one day, Numanian and the workers stood defiantly under a tree. Mr Hume went to call them to school, but they refused to come in.

“Very well,” said Mr Hume, “you need not come in unless you like, but the Missionary will pay you off afterwards.”

He then came in and the school proceeded. But, just as we were beginning the reading lesson,

Numanian came in quietly and sat down, followed by all the other workers. This was the turning-point in another great career. From that day, Numanian became at first an interested listener, and then an earnest seeker after truth. The Worship, which he at first opposed with all the energy of a determined character, he now humbly accepted. And, by degrees, he grew into one of God's heroes.

Our work was now fairly launched with such followers as Lomai, Iavis, Numanian, Tom, and Nelbina. A small company,—but one that was soon to exert an influence on West Tanna not to be measured by human forces.

CHAPTER IV

EXPLORING AND PREACHING

AT first building operations left little time during the week for exploring our district, and most of our preaching tours were made on the Sabbath. Rising with the dawn we set out in two companies,—Mr Hume leading the one, and I the other. In the afternoon we conducted services at Lenakel, and in the evening we held a service in English with our neighbours the Worthingtons. But as our house neared completion we were able to go further afield on week-days, and one day we decided to explore the country right across to the other side of Tanna. Our party consisted of Mrs Paton, Mr Hume, Tausi, and Seimata, Nakata and myself. Titonga and Litai were left in charge at Lenakel.

At first our road lay along the dry bed of a creek. Here the foliage met above us; and we could hardly see our way, as we had made a very early start. Then we climbed an almost perpendicular hill, and at last came to a village. It was only a small one, and we passed on to the next, where we got our first guide. Tausi ex-

plained where we were going, and a stalwart savage shouldered his gun without a word and stalked on before us. This was old Tavo, whom we afterwards nicknamed William the Silent, because he so rarely spoke. In the after years, he became one of our great men at Lenakel. We followed him through a lovely glen, with a carpet of ferns below and a canopy of palms above. Then we came to some high open country, where we found another village. Here Tavo left us, and we obtained new guides and pressed on. Our road now lay through a long line of deserted villages. Here and there we could see the charred remains of what had once been a house. It was a sad sight, this devastation of war. But we also saw some signs of returning life. There were several little clearings in the forest, which meant that plantations were being made ; and we learned that the people who had been burnt out were soon coming back.

After a while, we met the Chief of one of these returning tribes. When he saw us he stood rooted to the ground with sheer astonishment, and it was some time before we could make him understand who we were and where we were going. However, in the end, he undertook to guide us to the other side ; and the other men left us as they were afraid to go any further. Our new guide proved a thorough gentleman in

his way, with a dash of natural grace that made one forget that he was a naked savage.

Our way for miles lay across an elevated plateau, and the track was very good. At 7.15 we stopped for a lemon squash, and at eleven we boiled our billy and had lunch. The Chief was greatly interested in all these proceedings, and accepted all we gave him in the way of food, carefully wrapping it up in leaves, but eating none of it. He politely explained that he would eat it when he got home.

Soon after lunch it came on to rain, and walking became rather disagreeable. As we neared Weasisi, we noticed that the vegetation changed considerably, and for a time we missed the fine banyan trees. At last we climbed a very steep rugged hill, and our guide left us after giving some final directions to Tausi about the track. We were standing on the highest peak for miles around, but alas! a dense mist enveloped us and shut out all the view. The descent was difficult, and at times somewhat dangerous for a lady; but in two hours we found ourselves safely landed at Mr Macmillan's Station. He was away from home, but soon returned and was not a little surprised to find us in possession of his house.

We remained there the next day and had a glad time together. On the day following, Mr Malm, the local trader, kindly took us across the

bay in his boat to Nimtahn, and from there we had a much easier climb. The scenery was most beautiful, and we passed through some large villages, preaching the Gospel to wondering savages. The natives were greatly surprised to see a white woman, none ever having crossed the island before. At 6 P.M. we arrived at Lenakel and found all well. Our journey gave us a much better idea of our whole district, and also opened up friendly relations with many inland tribes.

About this time we got the sad news that the *Dayspring* was lost. For weeks we had been anxiously scanning the horizon. At last our suspense became awful. Then the *Wyrallah* appeared, and as her boat entered the passage Mr Hume shouted for news of the *Dayspring*. We held our breath as Mr Brewster stood up to reply. "She has gone down."

Our hearts sank as we heard the dreadful news, and our teachers wept. Even the Tannese were touched, and quite a wail of sympathy arose from the women when they heard the news. The loss of our dearly loved little ship brought us a new sense of loneliness. We felt as if the last link with home and friends had been broken. Most of our worldly possessions perished with her. But no lives were lost, and for this we thanked God. And we knew that, if God so willed, our little ship would speedily be replaced.

We were soon called upon to make another long expedition. A tribe on the other side of Tanna, away near the volcano, had made repeated raids upon the allies of Iavis and Lomai. Every now and again they surprised one of their villages, and shot one or more of their people. The tribe brought great pressure upon Iavis to make war upon their enemies, and they could not understand their War Chief's reluctance to fight. Iavis and Lomai came to me about it, and I urged them to prevent fighting if they possibly could, and offered to go on a peace-mission to their enemies. Iavis was delighted at this, and one morning about five o'clock Titonga and I set out upon our mission. As soon as we got up into the mountains, we were overtaken by heavy rain which continued all day. For the first few miles we followed the Weasisi track, and then we lost our way. At last we reached the top of a high mountain right in the heart of Tanna. From here we had a magnificent view of mountain and valley all around us. Close beside us was what I took to be a deserted hut ; but, on looking in, I saw a lanky savage sound asleep with a loaded gun at his head. I had doubts as to the wisdom of waking him, on the principle that it is best to "Let sleeping savages lie," but Titonga cheerfully yelled at him. The savage leapt to his feet and seized his gun, as I expected, to defend himself. But when he saw

two unarmed men hugely enjoying his fright, he grinned broadly and came out. He kindly agreed to act as our guide, and a very decent man he was. He first led us to his own village, and then to a second one surrounded by a high palisade. Here we saw some of the most evil-looking cannibals one could wish to avoid. They looked at us ferociously and rather hungrily, but allowed us to proceed in peace with our guide. We rejoined the Weasisi track for a few miles, and then turned southwards. Our road now became very difficult, as we had to cross several deep gullies. About noon we reached the enemy. The leading Chiefs, two young brothers, were away in the bush; but some vigorous yells from their people soon brought them to the village, where they gazed at us in astonishment. We explained who we were, and a very friendly talk followed. They promised not to begin the war again, and gave us a peaceful message to carry back to Iavis and his tribe. We then held a service, after which Titonga and I began our homeward march. It was a weary journey; but we reached home just before dark, and the success of our mission caused great joy at Lenakel.

Our next long tramp was to Kwamera, to visit Mr Watt's teachers during his absence. This time I took Tausi, and we had a most adventurous journey. For the first few hours we

got on well ; and then our guides left us, because they were at war with the next tribe. A nasty fall on a slippery rock did not make matters any easier. Soon the track was altogether obliterated, and we had to haul ourselves up a steep cliff by roots and creepers. Then we lost our way, and had to make a perilous descent to the sea. By this time our water was done, and we were in sore straits till some cocoanuts revived us. For miles we trudged along the shore, and then had to climb up into the mountains, where we wandered for hours. There were no cocoanuts, and we were almost overcome by thirst and fatigue. Tausi cut me a stick, and I leaned heavily upon it. Every now and again the faithful fellow looked round at me with an anxious expression. But we plodded on, resting every few minutes to regain strength. At last we came to a village. Some men ran upon us with loaded muskets, and would have shot us on the spot, but Tausi explained who we were, and the Chief said, "Don't shoot." I was so dead beat, that I stood leaning on my stick quite unconscious of our danger. They said that a trader on the other side had sold cartridges to their enemies, and that they had mistaken me for that trader. They quickly made up their minds that the best way to stop their enemy's supply of ammunition was to shoot the trader,

whom they now thought a merciful providence had delivered into their power. But when they found out who we were, they became most friendly, and set us upon the right track down to Kwamera. In fact we discovered that we were old friends, as they remembered the time when I stayed five months with Mr and Mrs Watt as a boy.

When they left us Tausi said to me—

“Close up you me finish to-day.”

“Yes, Tausi,” I replied, “we plenty tired along road.”

“No,” said Tausi, “close up you me finish along musket.”

He then told me how nearly we had been shot. I asked him if he was not afraid, and he said—

“No, me think suppose time belong me come, he good me die along musket. Suppose time belong me he no come, musket he no savey kill me.” And I realised that Tausi was even greater than I had thought him.

The teachers at Kwamera were surprised and delighted to see us. One of them could do nothing but whistle his astonishment. He dived into a clean shirt, and as soon as his head appeared at the opening he paused to give vent to another astonished whistle! They then got us tea and a change of clothing. Many memories

came crowding upon me, as I visited the old scenes. Every thing seemed sacred now; and for the first time I realized that Mrs Watt was gone. The teachers had kept the grounds in beautiful order, and had been faithful in all their work.

That evening and next morning we gathered the people in Church for service; and then we set out for home through pouring rain. Our friends of the day before led us as far as the fighting ground, and our troubles then began. At one place, we had to swing from one rock to another by means of overhanging creepers; at another we had to slide down huge boulders; and then again we had to jump chasms in the reef with the surf boiling around us. But towards evening we reached Lenakel in safety.

My next adventure was a sharp illness, when I had to learn what Professor Christlieb used to call "the passive voice" in the verb of life.

CHAPTER V

RECRUITING TROUBLES

ONE day a French labour schooner, the *Caroline*, anchored a few miles south of Lenakel; and her boats plied back and forward picking up recruits. Very soon the Chief of Imlau, a point off which the schooner was anchored, came to me followed by a long line of warriors.

“I have trouble,” he said; and then he told me that three of his nieces had run away to the French schooner. He wanted me to send a letter to the captain asking him to return the girls. Both he and their father, who was present, objected to their being recruited. I told him that a letter would be of little use, but that Mr Hume and I would go and see the captain. Willing hands launched the *Pioneer*, and an hour's stiff pulling brought us alongside the *Caroline*. The captain was civil, but said that he could do nothing till the recruiter returned. He ran up a signal, and the boats returned from the shore. The recruiter, a Mare man, called Womage, refused point blank to return the girls. We had a long argument, and he defied all the powers

that be, saying that the French regulations referred only to recruiting for Noumea and not for Vila. I then turned to the captain and said—

“I warn you, in presence of these witnesses, that it is illegal for you to take away these girls, as both their father and their Chief object to their being recruited. I hold you responsible, and I shall leave no stone unturned to bring you to justice.”

This brought on a fierce argument between the captain and the recruiter, the final upshot being that the girls were returned. The recruiter asked me not to interfere in future with his business. I replied that, as Missionary of West Tanna, I would always interfere where injustice was being done to the natives. He then told the natives that the girls were being returned, not because the Missionary had come on board, but because they had not been paid for!

The natives were delighted, especially Iavis who had come with us, and the Imlau men became very friendly. Formerly this tribe was bitterly opposed to the Worship. But we followed up the advantage we had gained over them by visiting their villages, and the Chief offered me a pig for my services in getting his nieces back. This I declined with thanks, but these villages were ever after open to the preaching of the Gospel, though as yet with little apparent result.

Another day, the French steamer *Ocean Queen* appeared off Lenakel. A boat came ashore with a couple of returned recruits; and the officer in charge asked me if he might land them under my care, as they belonged to a tribe just round the point. I agreed to do so, and the boat pulled back to the ship. I then had some talk with the man and his wife, and found that they did not belong to this coast at all, but to the other side of Tanna. They were both gorgeously dressed, and the woman clung to her husband's arm. The surrounding Heathen soon swooped down, and there was a wordy warfare on between two tribes as to who should get possession of the man and his boxes. Fearing for the safety of the couple, I settled the matter by taking them up to the Mission house. We then sent word to his brother, who happened to be living on the west side of Tanna; and he came down with his friends and took them home with him. But they had to scatter a good part of their hard gained earnings among the leading men of the local tribes, to ensure their good-will. They had been seven years in Noumea; and yet they at once threw off their clothes and went back into naked Heathenism.

A week or two later a Queensland labour vessel, the *Riologe*, landed four recruits—a married couple and two single men. One of the men at once went back into Heathenism, and cleared out

with some of his friends' property. The other made a feeble stand, and then became leader of one of the worst gangs of ruffians in the place. This was Jimmie Ierapuia, of whom more will be heard later on. The married couple, Neropo and Sarah, tried hard to resist the pleadings of their native friends, and for a time we had great hopes of them. But they also gave way, and to our great sorrow went back into Heathenism.

A few weeks later we had another visit from the French steamer. The rain was coming down in torrents, and a heavy sea was setting in. As the boat neared the shore, we saw a recruit on board with his box. He looked wet and miserable enough in the boat; but when he was put over the side he presented a ghastly sight. Emaciated and racked with a fearful cough, he was too weak to walk out of the water, but stood helplessly gazing about him. There were no friends to welcome him, so we agreed to take care of him and return him to his village. Mr Hume and Tausi carried up his small box, while I followed with the recruit. He told me his name was Notiang, and that he came from a village a few miles to the south. I had to walk very slowly, and when we had gone about a hundred yards, Notiang stopped and said, "Me sore," and would have fallen had I not caught hold of him. We had to half

carry him the remaining hundred yards to the house. By this time he was almost in a state of collapse ; but Mrs Paton got him a hot cup of tea, and his eyes fairly gleamed when he saw it. A warm bath refreshed him, and we got him into bed. Every two hours we gave him a little nourishment, and he came round wonderfully ; but he was still very weak. All night long his fearful cough sounded through the house, and our hearts ached for him. The poor fellow kept complaining that his throat and chest had been burned out with grog. It made our blood boil against his ruthless murderers. For two or three days he lingered on. Then his brother came and took him on his back and carried him home. It was only that he might die in his old village.

Notiang's story is only too common in these far lands. He left Tanna four years ago in a labour vessel, and was taken to Noumea. There he was worked till his strength was gone, and then sent back to die in his native land—to die like a dog without a knowledge of God. These men who sucked out his life-blood may go free here, but there is a God of Justice and of Mercy who will reckon with them some day. I would rather be this dying Heathen when that day comes, than those who had done him to death. Noumea and Vila, among other places, will have much innocent blood to answer for on that day.

The *Caroline* visited us again, but her recruiter had gone to his account. While steering his boat into an Ambrim passage, he was fired at by a native from behind a rock. The bullet took effect, and he fell over the side and sank like a stone. Poor Womage! It saddened us to think what he might have become, had his training fallen into other hands.

This labour traffic has had a dreadful effect in depopulating these islands. I have studied the question for six years from the Island point of view, and I am convinced beyond all shadow of doubt that this is one of the main causes of the dying out of our people. Many men blame the wearing of clothes. One day I took a naval doctor to see a man whom I suspected to be dying of phthisis. The doctor examined him carefully, and then turned to me and said—

“The wearing of clothes has brought this on,” and proceeded to theorise upon the subject. It was with malicious joy that I answered—

“That man is a Heathen, and has never worn clothes in his life.”

No, the labour traffic is mainly responsible, for it sucks out the young life-blood of the community, breaks up family ties, and everywhere leaves desolation and bad feeling behind it. I have seen a whole village emptied of its young men by the visit of a Queensland labour vessel ;

and most of their wives then recruited by the next French vessel for Noumea.

The labour traffic has been aided in its dire work by the trade in firearms and drink, a trade which has lined the pockets of British as well as French with ill-gotten gain.

Add to these the introduction and spread of European diseases, through returned recruits, and you have the three main causes of the rapid dying out of our people in the New Hebrides.



LENAKEL MISSION HOUSE

CHAPTER VI

OUR FIRST CHRISTMAS ON TANNA

ON Christmas Eve we invited our teachers to a social evening. We had various games which they greatly enjoyed, and at the close we made them each a present of clothing. The grace with which they conducted themselves would have done credit to any drawing-room. They can work well, these teachers, and they can play well.

Early on Christmas morning, a large number of natives gathered. They thought the sports were to be on that day ; and they had also got it into their heads that there was to be a free distribution all round. It made our hearts sad to see men, who had never looked near school or service, greedily hanging round in the hope of getting something. But what more could we expect from Heathen? Even white Heathen sometimes try to make something out of Christianity, while they refuse to accept its teaching.

At noon we rang the bell for service, and eighty-two natives responded. I gave an address on the coming of Christ, illustrated by beautiful

pictures. Lomai interpreted for me, and the people listened most attentively. We sang four hymns in their own mother tongue, and it moved us greatly to hear many of these naked savages joining in the singing. How we prayed that the Christ would come into their hearts, and that the next Christmas morning might dawn with a new meaning to them.

New Year's Day was a great field day for the natives. Early in the morning, armed bands began to arrive in the Mission grounds. Each band, as it came, took up a position apart from the others. Many of the natives were fiercely and horribly painted; and even women were in some cases hardly recognisable for paint. By 9 o'clock about three hundred savages surrounded our grounds, the women taking up a position of vantage whence they could survey the whole fold. With their rifles and their war paint, they looked much more like an attacking party than a company of friendly guests. Some of them had come great distances, and many different tribes were represented. They kept apart from each other, and we had great difficulty in getting any of them to mix up in the competitions. Lomai was our right-hand man, and did all he could to make the gathering a success. The Heathen were very anxious for a shooting competition; but we firmly refused to have anything

to do with shooting, so long as these guns were used to take human life. At noon, about one hundred and fifty of the natives attended the feast which we had prepared, the rest holding aloof and looking on from a distance.

In the evening, we had a time of special prayer for Tanna and its people.

Just after this the steamer brought us a beautiful organ. We unpacked it on the verandah, and the natives crowded round in eager expectancy. When Mrs Paton played over some of the tunes which we had taught them, their joy knew no bounds. Their eyes were like to start out of their heads. To them the "Bokas Nabuk" (singing box) was a wonder, a mystery. All of them were particularly struck with the pedal movements; and one of them suggested that there was a man inside, who cried out when Mrs Paton kicked him with her foot! Tausi asked them waggishly how the man could get his "kaikai" (food) inside a box.

First we sang "Jesus loves me" in Tannese, and the natives joined in, their wonder growing with each new hymn. Our own hearts were full, too, as the grand old tunes that we had sung in our childhood sweetly rose to God. It was an hour never to be forgotten. The sweet notes of the organ, the wonder-looking faces of the natives, singing in their own tongue the praises of a

Christ of whom they were only beginning to hear, the dark, unbroken mass of Heathenism around us, and the agony of prayer that rose from our hearts to God on their behalf,—these things will go with us to our graves.

Some time before this, an old Heathen, called Kalia, came to me with bad toothache. He insisted on having his tooth pulled out. I had nothing better than a pair of artery forceps to do it with, but I made a heroic attempt at the impossible. Kalia soon came to the conclusion that the cure was worse than the disease; and he left me after promising faithlessly to come again next day! But soon Kalia had worse than toothache to trouble him. For about this time a good many people had died, and Kalia, possessed by an insane desire for glory, boasted that he had caused their death by "netik." The people believed it, and the tribe decided to shoot him; but he put the breadth of the island between himself and them. Then he thought to stir up the inland tribes against Iavis and Lomai. Iavis came to me for advice, and I urged him to send a peaceful message to Kalia. This he agreed to do, and some of us set out to deliver it, but Kalia was nowhere to be found. His friends, however, warned him that if he did not take care he would be shot.

Kalia was deaf to warnings and threats alike.

He openly stated his firm resolve to shoot Noam, to whom he sent insulting messages such as—

“Kill all your pigs and have a good feast, for it will be your last.”

For a week he sought to carry out his purpose, but old Noam managed to keep out of his way. At last Nilua, a fine young fellow who was fast becoming interested in the Worship, decided to protect his father at all costs. Towards evening, Kalia sneaked up to Noam's village in the hope of finding him heavy with Kava. But Nilua was on the watch. A friend of his stopped Kalia as he was gliding noiselessly along the track, and engaged him in conversation. Kalia boasted that he was going to shoot Noam or his son. Alas! even in the midst of his boastful plans Nilua's rifle blazed out, and the bullet pierced his side. Nilua and his friend fled, while Kalia dragged himself painfully along for about a mile. Then he lay down in a lovely glen to die. Here one of Nilua's tribe came suddenly upon him, and the dying man, gathering up his last strength, clutched his rifle to shoot him. But the effort was too much for him; the rifle dropped from his powerless arms, and Kalia fell back dead.

It was a horrible deed. And yet Nilua was acting in defence of his father, and I blamed their “netik” system rather than him. Lomai came down next day and told me all about the tragedy and

how it had come about. I at once went up with one of the teachers to Nilua's village and gathered the people together. Nilua was present and very quiet, but totally unconscious of the awful guilt of murder. I spoke to them strongly and earnestly about the terrible evils of their "netik" system, and urged them to give it up and accept the Worship of Jesus, who alone could bring them peace and happiness.

A day or two afterwards, two women came out of the village next to Nilua's. A volley of muskets rang out from the scrub around, and both women fell dead. This was native warfare, the answer of the inland tribes to the shooting of Kalia.

This "netik" business is the curse of Tanna. The Sacred men possess certain stones called *netik* stones. With these stones they are believed to have the power of causing the death of any one they choose. It is necessary, however, that they get something belonging to the person whose life they wish to take. A piece of banana peel, cocoanut shell, tobacco, remains of food or leaf in which it has been wrapped up, a foot-print, basket, or anything of that kind will do. They take the bit of food, or whatever it is, and then gather leaves from certain short-lived trees, and rub them on the "netik" stone. The food and stone are then wrapped up in these leaves, and the whole is

placed between two fires, one above and one below. As the stone gets hot, the man is supposed to sicken and die. There are two kinds of sickness produced, in their belief, by "netik." The one is called the light, or walking sickness, in which the man has no pain, but becomes light and wastes away, dies on his feet as it were—that is consumption. The other they call the heavy sickness, in which a man is unable to rise, and is possessed by terrible heat—such as pneumonia, fever, etc. But just as the Sacred man has power to produce sickness, so he has the power to take it away. All he has to do is to take the stone out of the fire, and the sick one gets better. The Sacred man may be induced to do this by huge presents of pigs, or if that fails, by threats. Hence the importance of finding out who is causing the sickness. Hence also the willingness of men like Kalia to boast of causing death by "netik," that they may be feared, and have many pigs given to them.

All this seems to us very ridiculous. But the natives believe in it with their whole soul. They would as soon doubt their own being as doubt the truth of "netik." Their whole life is governed by this terrible belief. No native will throw away refuse of food, except in the privacy of his own home. There are two ways by which "netik" can be baffled; either by burning the refuse, or by

throwing it into the sea. The Sacred men can do nothing with it, once it has been in the fire or the sea. Hence you will often see a native carrying remains of food a long way, to throw it into the sea. They are kept in constant fear and suspicion over this superstition. Close friends are often changed into bitter enemies, through the belief that the one is trying to obtain something belonging to the other in order to give it to the "netik" men. If a man becomes ill, his friends go to all the tribes around and "talk netik." The great questions are, "Who is the netik man?" and "Who is the netik carrier?" or the man who carried the food to the "netik" man. While the man still lives they may try presents of pigs; but when he dies they have resort to the bullet. Any one belonging to the "netik" man's tribe will do, as long as they kill someone. Almost all the fighting on Tanna arises over their belief in "netik."

While the "netik" talk is on, the Heathen think of nothing else. It never enters their heads that proper food and nursing will do the sick one any good. Their one hope is to find out the "netik" man, and persuade him to undo his evil work. Meanwhile, the patient may die of starvation and neglect, or he may die of sheer fear.

Sometimes they hoped great things from the Missionary's medicine, for they regarded him as

also a Sacred man. With such it was just a question as to which was the stronger, "netik" or the Worship. But it is no easy matter to treat a patient, who is possessed by the belief that he is a doomed man, and who often refuses absolutely to take food or medicine. No amount of argument has the least effect upon their minds; their one answer is—

"Netik he belong Tanna; white man he no savey. Plenty man he die along netik."

Nothing but a new heart, set free by the truth of Christ, delivers them from this bondage.

CHAPTER VII

TO ANIWA AND BACK

ON Saturday, 30th January 1897, we had a delightful surprise in the shape of a visit from Mr Macmillan. He brought us grand news from Weasisi. Ten of his people had declared openly for Christ, and were now attending the Candidates' class. The dawn was breaking, and we were thrilled with joy.

The next day there was a great Heathen talk on Mr Worthington's beach. It was to make peace; but the atmosphere became heated, and, but for Mr Worthington and a young Chief stepping forward, shots would have been exchanged. We arrived on the scene just in time to meet Tom's tribe coming away, in a state of wild excitement. We gathered the leaders and urged them not to fight. That night we prayed very earnestly that war would not break out, and next day we visited Iuiap's tribe. Iuiap was surrounded by his warriors, and looked as if he would like to fight; but he promised, "Me fellow no fight first time," that is that he would not begin hostilities.

All was now in readiness for our visit to Aniwa,

and we waited eagerly for the steamer. That night, about eight o'clock, we heard her whistle. We at once lit great fires on the beach that they might see the landing. By twelve o'clock all our goods were landed, and we bade farewell to our teachers. There in the midnight we left them silently weeping,—even big, strong Tausi being unable to keep back his tears. And Fritz, our little Scotch terrier, howled piteously as the boat glided out into the darkness. Soon all that we could see of Tanna was a dark outline of hills with one solitary light—the light in the Mission house. How lonely it looked, one little light in the midst of a great darkness! “Shine on, lone star,” the dawn is coming, was the cry that filled our hearts, as we thought and prayed far on into the morning hours.

At daylight, we landed Mr Macmillan at Loanbakei, and two hours later we landed on Aniwa. Almost the whole island was there to welcome us. It was delightful to be amongst a Christian people! Even in outward appearance they are as different from the Heathen as light is from darkness. Willing hands carried our goods to the house, and we were delighted to find Kamasiteia, the head teacher, quite recovered from his illness. The path from the landing runs between a long avenue of lovely cocoanuts, and we found everything in beautiful order. Litsi, Sisi, Hutshi,

and Nalausai received us at the house with many "alofas" and greetings. Our hearts were gladdened and uplifted. We were also welcomed by Mr Bates, a Christian trader then living on Aniwa, who devoted most of his time to spiritual work amongst the natives.

The next day we had a prayer meeting, which was largely attended. We were specially struck with the large number of healthy, bright-faced children. I addressed the people in Aniwan, which was rapidly coming back to me. After the service we had a meeting of Session; and they presented a most gratifying report of the state of affairs on the island.

The following days were very busy ones for us—too busy as it proved for our health. We had to rise before daylight, to visit the morning village schools. Then we had sick cases to attend to, clothes to give out, classes to teach, and countless other things from morning to night. In the afternoons I conducted a teacher's class, and in the evenings we had singing and addresses on the children of the Bible. Arrowroot had also to be prepared, and 313½ lbs. were dedicated to be sold towards the expense of printing the New Testament in the language of the people. It was a busy and a happy time. The people worked well and learned well, and they entwined themselves around our hearts. They had their faults—but who has

not? The children were eager and respectful ; the young men took an active part in Christian work ; and there was only one able-bodied man on the whole island who did not attend Church regularly.

Kamasiteia, the head teacher, was a fine, Christian gentleman, and came nearest to Lomai of any native I have ever known. One day, when the trader was completely out of food, owing to the neglect of the steamer, Kamasiteia preached to the people on "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me." Then, after picturing the joy and the liberality of the people if Christ Himself should come to Aniwa, he said—

"But, people of Aniwa, one of Christ's brethren is here on Aniwa, and he is in need. Do to him as you would do to Christ Himself if He came."

A woman in going out gave the trader a native pudding which she had brought for her own dinner ; and from that day the Aniwans kept him in food till he was able to get a supply of his own.

A census of the island showed the population to be 166, made up of 82 children and 84 adults,—a fine, vigorous people, who gave promise of holding their own for many generations to come. The rush of work brought on fever, and both Mrs Paton and I had very severe attacks. It was our first experience of fever, and not a very pleasant one either.

On Tuesday, 16th February, at 5.15 A.M., we left Aniwa in our boat for Tanna. Early and dark as it was, large numbers gathered at the boat landing to say good-bye. We felt genuinely sorry to leave Aniwa, and yet we were longing to be at our darker post on Tanna. A five hours' pull brought us to Mr Forlong's station at Loanbakele. Here we rested a few hours, greatly refreshed by Mr Forlong's kindness, and by what we saw of his heroic work for God.

At 2.15 we left for Lenakele; but, as the wind was light, darkness overtook us before we rounded the last point. It is no easy matter to pick up a narrow passage between ugly reefs in the dark, so we shouted again and again to wake our teachers. At last a mighty yell broke the stillness on shore, followed by a huge piece of flaming wood hurled high into the air. It was our faithful Tausi; and, guided by his shouts, we soon reached the landing in safety.

Here bad news awaited us. In a few rapid sentences Tausi told us that Mr Worthington had been ill, Seimata was almost dying, Titonga, Litsi, and Somo were also very bad with fever. Mrs Worthington, who had gone to Aniwa with us, hurried up to her husband, and we quickly made our way to our teachers. First we saw Litsi; and then a mere shadow of a woman, whom none of us recognised till a faint smile revealed

Seimata's beautiful teeth. They were both weak and emaciated, and yet they had crawled over to the Mission house to light a fire for our tea. We packed them off to bed, and then visited Titonga and little Somo. Good old Tausi had attended to the sick teachers, kept the school going, and also gone over to look after Mr Worthington. He was quite worn out, and broke down as soon as we relieved him of the strain of nursing. It was a sad home-coming; but our return, and the visit of the Aniwans who came with us, put new heart into them, and before long all were well again. We were glad to find that peace reigned among the Tannese; and the next morning they came down and gave us a great welcome, which touched us deeply.

About this time, I found that drink was being sold freely to the Tannese. Iavis came to me and asked me to get the sale of it stopped, because it was destroying his people. I promised to do my best, but we had a long struggle before us ere we could persuade the British Company to give up selling drink to the local traders on Tanna. At last we gained the day, and the supply of drink was stopped.

One Sabbath morning, soon after this, word was brought that Lomai had given his wife a terrible thrashing the night before. We were all greatly shocked at the news. When Church time

came, Lomai was present with an expression of deep sorrow. Instead of speaking in English as usual, and asking him to interpret, I spoke in Aniwan, and asked Titonga to interpret into the Weāsisī dialect. As soon as I began to speak, Lomai hung his head in shame. After Church, I called him into the study and asked him to tell me all about it. He did so frankly. His second wife had got angry and pitched his belongings out of the house; and his heart had gone bad, and he had seized a stick and given her some smashing blows on the head and shoulders. I told him how bad a thing he had done, and what harm it would do to the whole cause. Lomai covered his eyes with his hands and said, in a broken voice, "I know it." We had a long talk, and Lomai was most penitent and humble. He said that, as soon as he had done it, he felt like killing himself, and prayed hard to Jesus to make his heart good. The man was in an agony of remorse, and we prayed together. I told him that for a time I would not ask him to interpret in Church or school. He felt this keenly, but humbly acquiesced; and it hurt me, as much as it hurt Lomai, to discipline; but I did it for his good and for the good of the cause.

We then went up to his village and attended to his wife. Lomai tended her very gently, and did all in his power to atone for his sin. Her

wounds soon healed, but for weeks she was very sulky.

This was a lesson Lomai never forgot. He was so far above all the others, intellectually and spiritually, that there might have been a strong temptation to spiritual pride. But this fall revealed to Lomai his own weakness, and his need of close dependence upon his Lord. Never did Lomai show the slightest leaning to self-sufficiency or pride. Indeed, never again had I to reprove him for the slightest inconsistency. It seemed as if this were the last great battle between the Old and the New in Lomai. From that day, he became one of the meekest and purest followers of Jesus that I have ever known in my life.

About this time Lomai, Iavis, and Nelbini began the practice of regular family worship. They prayed in English, but they were groping after God, led by His own Spirit. Outwardly, they were still naked Heathen ; but inwardly, they were not far from the kingdom of God, if not already in it, and there was a new light in their faces. But they had still many a fiery trial to pass through, ere they could give up all and follow Christ.

CHAPTER VIII

CLOTHED AND IN HIS RIGHT MIND

TUESDAY, 16th March, was one of our landmarks at Lenakel. The steamer brought us some fine boxes of clothing from London, and I urged the people to accept the Worship and put on clothes. I told them how loving hearts had sent them all the way from London, and showed them in the map how far that was, telling them how many days it took the steamer to travel across. They were greatly interested in the map, and wondered to see their own land so small in comparison with others. They call Tanna, "Ten Asul" (the great land)! Aniwa being "Ten Asuas" (the small land). I told them they must either bring native food for the clothes, or come and work four days on the Mission Station. Soon they began to come in twos and threes to work, while others brought yams and bananas. But the great difficulty was to make a start at wearing the clothes. A Tanna man is ashamed to be seen clothed; and it needed tremendous moral courage for the first man to begin. That man was Lomai. One Sabbath morning I saw

a man in a red shirt and lavalava coming up the path. I hastened out, thinking he was a stranger from the other side. But, to our unutterable joy, it was Lomai. The Heathen called him an old woman, and if there is anything a Tanna man hates to be called, it is "old woman"! But he paid no heed to their ridicule. It was a distinct declaration that he had for ever turned his back on Heathenism, and that he was now an out and out Worshipping man. Only those who have lived in the midst of naked Heathenism can know the joy that thrilled our hearts to see Lomai clothed that morning. He had now taken the first decisive step; the Spirit had begun to work in his heart, and we knew that the rest would follow.

By degrees, some women plucked up courage to follow Lomai's example. Each Sabbath, we counted one or two more who came clothed. Then a few men began to wear clothes, at first shamefacedly, but their courage grew with numbers. The Worshipping party were now, for the first time, outwardly distinct from the Heathen. It was a small party, truly; but it was compact and united, a force for ever after to be reckoned with on West Tanna.

One Sabbath morning, when we went to Loinio, I thought the people much slower than usual in coming out. Presently I saw a boy working his way into a shirt,—a fine little fellow who had never

worn clothes before. Then I saw his little sister emerge in a nice dress, and the mother followed later likewise dressed, while the father brought up the rear in a long pink nightshirt. Iavis turned out in a coat, and Numanian slipped away and put on a topcoat. His wife also was dressed. I shall never forget the joy of seeing these people coming clothed for the first time! We had a stirring service, and our hearts surged with hope.

Sometimes native ideas of dress were somewhat trying to our risibles. One day, a man came to Church with nothing but a vest and a tall silk hat. At the next service, the wife wore the silk hat, and sat with her neck very stiff all the time lest it should topple over! Every now and again, she tried to keek round without moving her head to see if she was being duly admired! It was quite a common thing to see a man in a woman's dress, and a woman in a man's coat. Sometimes a whole family had only one dress between them, and each wore it in turn,—father, boys and all, till it had gone through the lot.

One day, a woman suddenly remembered in the middle of the service that she had forgotten to put on her dress. She at once began to wriggle into it, and it took her some time even with friendly hints and tugs from her neighbours. All this while the Missionary was solemnly preaching!

New comers were often puzzled what to do during the service. They thought that they would bring upon themselves dire calamity, if they did not do exactly the right thing. Those around generally gave them audible and friendly instructions. When I rose to pray, the old hands would call out, 'Apul, apul' (sleep); and the newcomers would screw their eyes tight shut lest they should open by accident. They would remain thus after the prayer was finished; and their neighbour would give them a vigorous dig in the ribs! The stranger would then start up with a terrified grunt, thinking he had committed some unpardonable sin, and his gentle monitor would say in a very audible whisper, "Ait" (awake)! Or, a stranger would come in with a basket on his head for a hat and forget to take it off;—"Osita tamkapa!"—(Take your hat off), would be hurled at him from various quarters. The man would duck his head and whip off his hat, and then look sheepishly at me to see if I was very angry, but my benign expression would reassure him.

Among the first to follow Lomai's example in wearing clothes were Iavis, Numanian, Nelbini and Tom. They worked for clothes for themselves and then for their families, and their example inspired the weaker ones to follow in their wake.

One night we were startled by a cry from the

shore. It was a woman's voice, and its tone was of suppressed excitement. We ran out, but could see nothing. Then the cry was repeated, and Seimata rushed past us, calling out, "Ta bot Aniwa" (the Aniwan boat)! We were soon at the landing, and found that the Aniwans had brought back the *Pioneer*, which I had sent over to Aniwa with them. Litzi's son and Seimata's were on board, and there was great rejoicing all round. After a few days Lomai and Tausi collected a Tanna crew to take the Aniwans back and return with the *Pioneer*. I went with them as far as North Tanna to evangelise while they were on Aniwa.

We had a fair wind as far as Loanatit, where we landed about noon. Three men met me at the landing, and I got one of them to lead me up to the village, while the crew boiled the billy and made tea on the beach. Peter, my guide, did not seem quite sure about me at first; but we were soon on good terms, and he told me all about the place and the people. A sharp climb up the face of a steep cliff brought us to a beautiful grassy slope,—my guide explaining that they brought heavy pigs up this track from the shore. A few minutes' walk then brought us to the village. Here we had a splendid view of mountain and gully, while away across the sea were the blue mountains of Erromanga. The village was right



SEIMATA AND TAUSI

on the edge of a precipice. A man received us very cautiously. I asked him if he remembered some Missionaries coming ashore the year before ; but his memory seemed to give him no light on the subject. But when I said that one of them was an old man with white hair, he grasped my hand and said—

“Now me savey you.”

Then he shouted “Tom,” and Tom yelled back a reply from the other side of the ravine. Soon he appeared, followed by his wife, both dumb with astonishment at the sight of a white man in their village. We had a short service, and then made our way down to the beach. There we had another service ; and I asked them to talk the matter over, and promised to come back on Saturday to find out whether they would like a teacher or not.

From Loanatit we had a long and heavy pull to Loanbakel, where Mr Forlong gave us a kindly welcome. The next morning Mr Macmillan arrived. He had started on the previous day, but had missed the passage on the other side of the point in the dark. They had got on to the reef, and had to stand in the water for three hours keeping the boat afloat till help arrived. They had then spent the night in wet clothes in a copra-house. It was a happy meeting ; and we did some itinerating together in spite of the heavy rain that

was falling. We were delighted to see so many natives wearing clothes as a result of Mr Forlong's work. In the evening, we held a special service in the boat-house, where our crews were camped for the night, and we urged them to decide for Christ.

The next morning we parted on the beach. Mr Macmillian set out for Weasisi, the *Pioneer* started for Aniwa, and I sailed for Loanatit in Mr Forlong's boat. On the way, I got all the information I could out of my crew. As we neared Loanatit I asked one of them if he was afraid of the people there. "No, me no fright," he said, but he was quietly slipping a fresh cartridge into his gun all the same! About twenty-five people were awaiting us on the shore. We sat down on an old canoe under the banyan tree; and Peter told me that the Chiefs and people had talked the thing over, and decided for a teacher. The old Chief who had opposed us the year before was dead, and his son was favourable to the Worship. We then held a service together, and I preached the Gospel to them. I was delighted with the result of our visit, and promised to settle a teacher among them as soon as I could get one.

About midday Mr Forlong's boat returned to Loanakel, and Peter led me to Black Beach. Here he showed me ground where a teacher

had once been settled for a time in the old days. He told me to keep along the coast till I got to Lenakel, and then returned to Loanatit, leaving me to go on alone. It was a long, rough walk, with not a single village for miles. At one time, I became so weary and thirsty that I thought I must give in. I looked in vain for a water-spring. At last I came to a little pool in the rock, and it was only half-salt, so I drank some of it, and lay down with my feet in it for a quarter of an hour. This revived me, and I pressed on. But it was long after dark when I reached Lenakel, more dead than alive.

The *Pioneer* was to have returned from Aniwa on Monday, and we lit great fires on the beach, but no boat appeared. On Tuesday night we again lit fires, but still there was no sign of the boat. On Wednesday, ugly rumours reached us. The people of the North sent word that the boat had foundered, and that all the crew were drowned. We did not believe the story, but the Tannese did, and Iavis came to me in great excitement. We cheered him up as well as we could, and at night we lit a huge fire that would burn till daylight. After ten o'clock we went to bed feeling rather uneasy; but we laid all our anxiety before God, and felt comforted. At midnight we were roused by the boat-cry. We hurried down to the beach and listened. Out of

the darkness, far away to sea, we heard again the high-pitched boat-cry. Joyfully we answered it, and our hearts rose to God. Our boat was safe. We heaped huge logs on the fire, and they blazed up rarely! In half-an-hour our boat was at the landing, and we were gripping Tausi and Lomai warmly by the hand. The next morning there was great rejoicing among the Tannese, and Iavis went about beaming.

This visit did our Tannese an immense amount of good. They saw on Aniwa what a Christian community was, and they were deeply impressed. On the Sabbath Lomai gave an address to the people, describing in glowing colours all that they had seen and heard.

After this came our Synod gathering, where we met our fellow missionaries of the Fund, Dr and Mrs Bowie. It was a helpful and uplifting time. Despite great differences of opinion on some questions, the meetings were saturated with prayer, and we all felt that it was good for us to be there. After Synod, Mr Hume went north with the steamer to help in building Dr Bowie's house.

CHAPTER IX

THE SPIRIT WORKING

ON our return from Synod, we found all going on well. There was only one cloud, but that was rather a black one. The people from the other side had made another raid upon the Loinio tribe, and shot an old man. Most of the tribe wanted at once to retaliate, but Iavis and Lomai made a determined stand. They went from village to village persuading their people to keep the peace—a strange mission for the war Chief and his leading warrior! Lomai said to me—

“ They call us old women, but we don't care. We don't want to fight. We want to come to school, and keep talk belong Jesus.”

Iavis and Lomai acted nobly in the crisis, and their efforts were crowned with success. Nothing but God's Spirit could have given them such moral courage.

A day or two afterwards I was working at the language with Lomai. We came to the word *kava*, and Lomai told me about its effect on the people.

“ Oh, if it is good kava a man loses his senses altogether.”

Then he told me that he had always drank kava till quite recently, but that he had now given it up. And this is how Lomai came to give up kava : I tell it in his own words—

“ One night me dream along night, and me think Misis Paton come to me. She growl plenty along me and say, ‘ Lomai, what for you drink kava? By-and-bye suppose you drink him you get very ill.’ Me say, ‘ Oh no, Misis, me no get ill ; kava he very good.’ But Mrs Paton she say, ‘ Yes, by-and-bye you ill.’ Then I wake and think, ‘ Oh, it is only a dream,’ and I go on drink kava.

“ Then me dream again, and I think Mr Hume he come and growl along me. He say, ‘ Lomai, what for you drink grog? By-and-bye you get very sick and die, suppose you drink all the same.’ I say, ‘ No, Mr Hume, I no drink grog.’ But Mr Hume he say, ‘ Yes, you drink grog, and suppose you no give it up you get very ill.’ Then me wake again and think all the same before.

“ That night me drink kava again, and then me begin to feel very bad. By-and-bye I get very ill, and close up me die. Then I think, that no only a dream ; kava he bad, me no drink any more. And me no drink kava any more.”

And so Lomai took another great step into the liberty wherewith Christ had made him free.

Tom now began to come to the front again. His period of reaction was coming to an end, and a new expression of rest was coming into his eyes. One day I was painting my boat when Tom came and sat down on the sand. After watching me awhile in silence he said—

“By-and-bye me wear clothes, make heart belong me good.”

I said that was good so far, but explained that it needed Jesus to make the heart good. Tom agreed, and then after a long pause he said—

“Suppose me want lamp, you sell one along me?”

I said, “No, Tom, suppose you want lamp, you go along Harry, he sell you one.”

Harry is the name by which Mr Worthington is known among the natives, his surname being altogether too hard for their tongues to get round. After another pause Tom said—

“Suppose me get lamp along Harry, you give me kerosene?”

But I referred him to the same quarter for the kerosene. I wondered what Tom wanted with the lamp, but soon forgot all about the incident.

A week or two after this Tom came to me with a beaming face. He told me that he had got a lamp, and that he now held school every

evening in his village. They met in an old house, but it was not nearly big enough to hold all that came. Now I saw what Tom had been driving at about the lamp! We were overjoyed at this grand news, and promised to visit his school. So, the following evening, with a lantern to light our way, Mrs Paton, the teachers and I set out for Iakurmig. And what a welcome we received! The women crowded around Mrs Paton crying out, "Awe Misi Tana" —their favourite name for Mrs Paton.

There was quite a throng outside the door, but inside the little building was crowded almost to suffocation. Tom Kouiamera and Iauiko sat on boxes at the far end, and the rest squatted on the ground, while high above them all hung Tom's lamp. The moment we appeared at the door two boxes were passed over the heads of the people for us to sit on. Tom opened the meeting with a hymn. He read it little by little, and the people repeated it after him. It was an English hymn and they sang it with zest. Then Tom prayed in English, and it stirred our hearts to hear one of our Tannese pray for the first time before us. And this was Tom's prayer as nearly as I can remember it in his own words:—

"Oh Lord God Father, we thank Thee this night for bring altogether people here. Lord Father, help altogether, make we fellow strong

along Jesus. We no savey much, we savey too little. O Lord Father, stop along heaven good fellow place, look down along this world and see every man sinner. Jesus He born piccaninni, He grow man, He shed blood along cross wash away sin belong heart. O Lord Father, help we altogether think about Jesus every day, every hour. Keep from steal, keep from tellum lie, keep from every bad thing, keep from Satan. Help we altogether keep close along Jesus every day, every hour. Help every man and woman here, and every man who no come help bring him come. O Lord Father, we altogether sinner. Nothing take away sin, only blood of Jesus. Jesus Master, we thank Thee. Help us all we go along work we think about Jesus all the time. All this we ask for Jesus' sake. Amen."

An address from me and a few more hymns closed this memorable meeting. It was the work of God and we could only look on with adoring hearts.

Tom soon found the old building to be too small, so he carried the sides of it into the public square, and erected a much larger building opposite the village kava house. There he conducted service every evening, and Iolo, Iesua and Iauilam helped to teach the women their letters.

We were greatly pleased by Iesua's eagerness to learn. One day she saw some Heathens help-

ing themselves to Mr Worthington's corn. She reproved them and told them that the Misi had taught them that it was bad to steal. The women dropped the corn and ran away in great fear.

A few days later we all went up to Iakurmig to open Tom's new Church. When we reached the village, Tom and his helpers made a great heap of food in the middle of the square as a present to the visitors. We then made a return heap of clothes. This done, we went into the new Church, which was crowded to the door, over seventy people being present. I preached on the building and dedicating of Solomon's Temple—a vastly different affair in men's eyes, but perhaps not very different in the sight of God. We were deeply stirred at the opening of our first village Church. After the service, the heaps were divided and we returned home.

About this time, our Church at Lenakel became too small to hold the people, so we began the fine big lime and thatch building which now stands on the Station. Tausi, Titonga, Lomai, Iavis and Numanian were our leading workers, Nelbini, Tom and others helping occasionally. First we went into the forest, and felled huge trees for posts. Then we went out on to the reef at low tide, and broke up coral stone, boating it home when the tide came in. When we had enough stone we dug a great pit and filled it up

with wood, mixing green with dry. Then we heaped the stone upon the wood, and set fire to it. It burned for three days and then we had a fine pit of lime. While we were cutting posts and burning lime, the women gathered sugar cane leaf and weaved it on to long reeds for thatch. It was a lengthy task with so few workers, but it was a great joy to see our Church daily growing under our hands.

The Heathen came down now and then, and exclaimed with wonder at the immense building we were putting up. And when they looked at our small band of Worshippers, they smiled and thought that we were mad. One day, some of them tried to persuade our workers to stop working. They said they would get much more from Harry—which was not true, of course. At last Iavis got angry and said—

“Very good you go work along money, by-and-bye you go along big fire! Me work along Misi, me want to go Heaven.”

The Heathen at once decamped, feeling rather uneasy at the mention of “big fire.”

Shortly after Tom began his village service, Iavis and Lomai began a service at Lapuna. Three or four villages met together there every evening, and Iavis told them what he had heard at the midday school at Lenakel. Numanian soon became a leader in this little band of

Worshippers, and Heathen were won for Christ by these men who had themselves only just emerged from gross darkness. Truly the Spirit was working mightily in their hearts. They had no building as yet, but they gathered under the village banyan tree. Many a fiendish plot had been discussed and decided upon under that tree ; but henceforth nothing but the Gospel of Jesus was ever proclaimed beneath its branches.

Iavis the war Chief now became a great preacher of peace. Taking Lomai with him, he visited all his allies, and refused to talk about anything but the Word of Jesus. Together they visited the Nouramene, a friendly tribe some miles to the south. The advent of the war Chief and his leading warrior caused a stir in the tribe, and soon the people gathered from the various villages. Lomai and Iavis spent two days among them, preaching the Word of Jesus. The Nouramene were astounded. They had gathered to hear far other news from the war Chief.

“What name?” they said. “We all come together hear news belong Tanna. You come tell us another fellow news. We no hear all the same before !”

“No,” replied Iavis. “Belong me one fellow talk now—talk belong Jesus. Suppose you listen me talk along Jesus.”

Another day they visited Lonapkeramera.

The whole village turned out to hear their news. To their surprise, it was no Tanna talk about "netik" and fighting, but news of Jesus. They talked and persuaded, till Lomai was dead beat and went into a house to have a sleep. When he awoke and came out, Iavis was still in full swing. Iavis is the best talker in the whole district, he can go on all day and talk any number of Heathen down—and he talks good sense too. Tausi waggishly calls him "Captain Talkitalk." The result of their visit to Lonapkeramera was that the people asked Lomai to come and teach them every night. Here, under the banyan tree, he gathered them night after night, till the whole village became Worshippers.

One day, the teachers and I set out for Loanatit in the *Pioneer* to see how Peter and his fellows were getting on. A large number of Heathen met us and were very friendly. The war with the inland tribe was over, and Peter showed me a reed which had been planted as a seal of peace. Two of the inland natives were present, and all united in asking for a teacher. They were tired of fighting, and wanted to "stop quiet." We greatly enjoyed our visit, and the last words they shouted out to us as the boat shot through the passage were—

"Send us teacher, he come quick."

On our return we found that Lomai, Iavis, and

Nelbini had helped Mrs Paton to conduct the weekly prayer meeting. Next morning Lomai was ill with fever, but he crawled down through the pouring rain that he might again help Mrs Paton in case we had not returned.

But we found that the Devil had been at work as well. Nelbini's father and some others had sold one of our school girls to a tribe some miles to the north of us for a Heathen practice too abominable to mention. Lomai had done all he could to prevent it, but in vain. It was a sickening revelation to me of what Heathenism really is. We visited four villages and saw the leading men concerned. I insisted that the full price must be paid back and the girl restored. There was vehement opposition, and days of talk followed. Iuiap had received a pig as his part of the pay, but the pig was eaten, and he refused to give up one of his own instead. Lomai and Nelbini helped me day after day, till at last the guardian of the girl restored his part of the profits. Nelbini gave a pig, but still there was one lacking to make up the full price, so I gave our pig to complete the thing. Then we launched the *Pioneer* with a freight of pigs and mats. The Heathen bolted when they saw us coming, but Nelbini and Lomai ran after them and persuaded them to come back. We had a long talk and the Heathen were simply dumb with astonishment.

They could see no evil in a custom which filled our hearts with such revolting horror. However, they accepted the returned price and restored the girl, and we sailed home in triumph. It was a great victory for the Worship, and a distinct blow to Heathenism. Nabupo now came back to school, happy at being among her own people again.

A good many people were now wearing clothes. It was a great joy to come home from our long Sabbath tramps, and see a group of well-dressed natives sitting around Mrs Paton on the verandah, lost in wonder at the pictures she was explaining to them. Some had even got the length of having two dresses, one for working, and one always kept clean for Sabbaths.

Even among the Heathen, we had a gleam of encouragement now and again. For example, one day at the close of a village service an aged Chief said to me—

“That is good news. Very good you tell altogether man Tanna quick.”

It was old Numanian, who in his younger days had led a party of warriors to Port Resolution to try and kill my father. He was now almost blind, and could only walk with the help of a stick.

CHAPTER X

DECISION FOR CHRIST

ONE day Lomai came to see me. He said his heart was very sore. I took him into the study, and he unburdened his soul to me. He was greatly troubled because he had two wives, and he felt that he should have only one.

“Me think all the time, what am I doing with another wife now? It is all right for me now, but the woman she no savey much yet, and it is very hard for her.”

We prayed over it, and I advised him to bring both his wives regularly to school, and to teach them at home; also to pray daily to Jesus, and the way would be opened up. I had never mentioned the subject of two wives to any of the Tannese. It was entirely the working of God's Spirit in Lomai's own heart.

Not long after Lomai came back to me and said—

“Misi, very good you pray very hard along me, for my heart be plenty sore.” He told me that he had prayed much about giving up his second wife, and his way had been suddenly opened up.



LOMAI AND NAUPUM

A young relative of his had come to manhood, and this is always ushered in on Tanna by unspeakable abominations. Nothing but Lomai's splendid stand saved young Lohman from these Heathen ceremonies. The thought then came to Lomai: Why not give his second wife to Lohman. He at once gathered together all the relatives concerned, and in due time the marriage was arranged. Lomai was full of joy, but his heart was sore nevertheless.

"It's the old fashion," he said, "and we have been used to it on Tanna. Suppose Jesus He no stop in heart, a man can't do it. Suppose Jesus no stop along heart, Misi Paton, a man would kill himself sooner than do that. It's all right for me, only I can't help thinking about it, and my heart very sore. By and bye my heart no sore, but to-day and to-morrow me feel plenty sore. Me want you pray very hard along me."

Dear Lomai! he was passing through a baptism of fire, but he never flinched. He suffered keenly, and it made him gentle. He learned, too, how strength is to be found in Jesus only. One day some of his friends said to him—

"Suppose we come along Worship; Misi he tell us give up all wife only one."

But Lomai answered, "No, Misi he no tell you that. Misi tell you word belong Jesus. All you do is to listen good. By and bye, when Jesus stop

along your heart, He make it easy for you. No use you think about it now, he too hard for you. You listen along word of Jesus. Suppose you get Jesus along your heart, he no hard for you any more."

Lomai spoke out of the deep experience of his own heart. God was teaching him through suffering.

Iavis was also troubled because he had three wives. But he soon made up his mind, and put away his second and third, though he still provided for them, and saw that they lacked nothing. Though far below Lomai in intellect and spiritual insight, yet Iavis was a giant among his fellows, and a true follower of Jesus according to his light. One day he said to me—

"Altogether talk belong me finish, only one fellow he stop, talk belong Jesus."

And he was true to his word. Lomai said to me—

"Iavis, he strong. Suppose he see a stranger, he get alongside him quick, and tell him about Jesus. We no more talk belong Tanna, Iavis and me, we talk about Jesus along altogether man."

Seeing that God's spirit was working so deeply in some hearts, we felt that the time had come to call for definite decisions for Christ. So after much prayer, I addressed the people one Sabbath morning on the Lord's Supper, and called upon

those who were willing to make a definite and full surrender of their hearts and lives to Christ, to come to me after school the following Friday. It was a week of much prayer, and Mrs Paton and I visited several villages in the interval. On the Wednesday night we visited Iakurmig, and had a solemn service under the great banyan tree. Iavis, Lomai, Nelbini and Numanian took a very earnest part in the meeting, and about sixty people were present. It gladdened and uplifted us to hear these Tannese speak and pray.

At Tom's village, we had a good time. When the little girls saw Mrs Paton they jumped and yelled with delight, then they made a rush, and taking both her hands, led her into the village. It touched us deeply to see their affection.

On the Friday, I again spoke earnestly to the people about decision for Christ, and what it meant. I asked only those who wanted to give their hearts wholly to Jesus, and to live for Him alone, to come forward. Then we went into the study and prayed. First Lomai came in, then Iavis and Numanian, then Naupum (Lomai's wife), then Tom and his wife, Ialo, followed by Iauilam and Iesua. As each one came in, our hearts filled anew, and no words could tell the feelings that surged within us. Nelbini sent word that he would come the following Friday, as he could not be present that day. These eight men and

women we formed into a Candidates' class, to prepare them for baptism. It was a little company, and some of them were very weak, but they were all in dead earnest, and meant what they were doing. It had cost them all something, and one or two of them more than words can tell, to make this decision. It was a happy day for us, and we felt that Tanna's dark night would soon be over.

A few nights before he joined the class, Nelbini gathered his village together, and standing at the roots of a great banyan tree, he told them that he was now going to decide for Christ. He urged them not to vex his soul any more with Heathen customs, and pled with them to give up the old fashion and accept the Worship. That was the beginning of a regular evening service at Lonapuas, Nelbini's village. Some opposed him bitterly, including his old father, but Nelbini persisted, and in the end he had the joy of winning his village for Christ. Among the first to be touched was Nelbini's stepmother, Teniau. Mrs Paton gave her a slip of paper, with a text in Tannese written upon it. Teniau spelt this over every night before the fire, and then prayed before going to sleep. Her husband at first looked on with good-natured contempt, then became interested, and finally joined the Worship.

Of course this open decision for Christ aroused intense opposition among the Heathen. They

warned the Worshipers against "that bad man, the Missionary," and told them that they would all die if they did not leave the Worship. I told our converts that they must expect opposition and abuse of all sorts, and Lomai said—

"Yes, me talk plenty along altogether last night. Me tell them Devil get man all the same Jesus, and he see some man give his heart along Jesus, he make man belong him talk plenty. No good we listen along talk belong Devil, very good we hold fast word belong Jesus."

And so Lomai comforted himself and strengthened his fellow-converts.

Week by week the little band grew, Vihikenan, the War Chief's wife, and Lohman, Numanian's wife, being among the next to come forward. It was happy work teaching this class of Candidates, they were so eager to learn. One day, when coming home from Loinio, I met Numanian deeply engrossed in the study of St Luke. I had brought over a copy of Mr Gray's translation from Weasisi a day or two before; and Numanian, Lomai and Iavis at once began to study it, though it was in a foreign dialect. In no way could you please Numanian better than to sit down beside him and go over a few verses of the Gospel, or spell over a hymn to him. He would persist till he could repeat it off by heart; and then he would go home joyfully conning it over to himself.

CHAPTER XI

AMONG THE IOUNMENE

ONE day a middle-aged Heathen, who described himself as Jimmie Palmer, came to me for medicine. He was a stranger, so I questioned him about his tribe, and finally promised to go and see him. Mrs Paton asked him if the road was very far. Jimmie studied her critically, and then said—

“You young fellow, you no old fellow, he no long way, you savey walk.”

Not long afterwards Iakar, a Tanna man who had settled for some years on Tongoa, and become a Christian there, returned to Tanna. He had left his wife, Lewi, a Tongoan woman, on her own island, till he should come and make a home on Tanna and see if it was safe. Iakar was connected with Jimmie Palmer's tribe, and Tom had a sister married into that tribe, so one day we set out to visit them. They lived a long way inland to the north of Lenakel, and were called the Iounmene. Tom was our guide; and three hours' easy walking brought us to their first village. Here we came upon about fifty savages

holding a war council. Jimmie Palmer beamed all over, and introduced us to his fellow-chiefs. The warriors crowded round us, and listened respectfully while we preached the Gospel to them. They showed us great friendliness, and we returned home well pleased with the result of our visit.

After this I had to see Mr Watt on Synod business; so early one morning Mrs Paton, Noumeta, and I started for Weasisi overland. The first village on the road was Tom's, and the people gave us a very hearty send-off. At Losiganu, the next village, we came upon another war council, as the island was in a very disturbed state just then. The men came round us at once, but the women were afraid to join us, and even Mrs Paton had difficulty in getting near enough to speak to them. A little further on we heard wailing,—a man had been shot the day before. At the next village a volley of guns was fired not far away during the service. The men picked up their guns and ran; but it turned out to be a band of warriors shooting the pigs of their enemies. Then we came to a village where a crowd of girls and boys gathered round us. They were greatly delighted with Mrs Paton's hair. First, they asked for the hat to be taken off, and then they asked for the hair to be untied. Mrs Paton humoured them, and they danced and

clapped their hands with delight—a woman with long hair, and fair!

We now descended to the sea, and two hours' rough walking along the shore and over some nasty points brought us to Weasisi, where a warm welcome from Mr Macmillan and a happy evening made us forget the weary length of the road. Next morning we all went to Port Resolution by boat. Mr Watt was most kind, and we had a splendid few days together.

Amidst a good deal of work we found time to make an excursion to the volcano. It was an awe-inspiring sight, which can be no more described than photographed. We could simply gaze and wonder and start back at the terrific explosions, that made the whole mountain tremble to its base. When the smoke and steam cleared a little, we could see down the crater hundreds of feet to the bottom, which was a seething mass of molten lava. Then there would be a vast jet of steam and smoke, followed by a most terrifying report as of a thousand cannons, and huge masses of burning lava and red-hot stones would be hurled high up above our heads. Some of the natives took to their heels at the first explosion, and nothing would persuade them to come near the crater again.

When we got back to Weasisi we found that war had broken out to the north, and that the

road by which we had come was closed. There was another road, however, still open, and we returned by it. We had to climb over a very high mountain, but otherwise the road was a very good one.

At Lenakel a message was awaiting me from the Iounmene to go up and see them, as there was much talk of fighting. The teachers and I at once went up and visited three of their villages, and the Chiefs all agreed to keep the peace. Towards evening, as we were conducting our last service at Jimmie Palmer's village, a rifle shot rang out. No one took any notice of it at the time, but just after we had left the village the death wail was raised. My heart sank, for I knew then what the shot had meant. We were just turning back to the village, when the Chief and his men met us and motioned us forward. I followed hard after the Chief, and we soon came upon the scene of tragedy. In a little clearing in the forest, where she had been digging her yam heaps, lay an old woman with a bullet-hole through her body. It was an awful scene. The women flung themselves on the body in frantic grief, and the men darted about with grim, determined faces. For a few moments my feelings overcame me; but I crushed them back, and gathered some of the men together. I talked and prayed with them, and they promised not to

fight, if I would write to the man-of-war to come and visit them and talk to their enemies. I said I would write, but could not promise any definite result. However, I told them that I would return in two days and visit all their Chiefs. It was with heavy hearts that we made our way back to Lenakel, through the gathering darkness. That scene long haunted me; and I thought that if only God's people in Christian lands could see it, they would flood the islands from end to end with Gospel light, till Heathenism had not a hole or corner in which to hide its head.

We spent the next day building at our Church, and on the following morning Noumeta and I set out for the Iounmene. Mr Hume and the teachers were ill, so our party was a small one. But Tom joined us at Iakurming, and a band of armed warriors. Nakat, their general, led the way, armed with a rifle and a belt of cartridges; then came the Missionary armed with a kodak, followed by Noumeta armed with the lunch basket; then came Tom with a walking stick, followed by a long line of armed savages. Each village, as we passed through it, added its quota of armed men. All were on the alert; and, at the least sound in the scrub, the muskets were grasped in both hands and held ready to fire. Once, someone began to chop wood in the bush, and the whole line halted till it was discovered who it

was. It was a strange peace mission, and I wondered what kind of counsel Nakat would give the Iounmene. But I knew that God was able to overrule his counsel whatever it was.

At last we reached Jimmie Palmer's village, and the Chief at once came forward to receive us. He said—

“I was cross when I saw the marks on Iaptoto's body, and we would have gone to shed blood that night, but you told us not to fight. Your word was good, and I have taken it. It is not fear that keeps me from fighting, for I have killed many men, and my tribe is stronger than theirs. But I have taken your word, and I want to give up fighting and live quiet.”

We then went through the whole tribe from village to village. Great crowds followed us and listened eagerly to the Gospel. They said—

“Your word is good. You must send us a Missionary quickly. We will sell you any land you like, with good springs of water. At first we did not want the Missionary, because we thought he would be like the white man, but now we have heard your word, and it is good. And our hearts are glad.”

It was a joyous triumphal progress through the tribe. Men, women, and children followed us from village to village. They had never been visited by a white man before. The Chiefs all

decided for peace. One old Chief, called Nematik, was specially earnest in haranguing his people. He was a fine type of savage, quite unspoiled by contact with evil whites. He said that henceforth he had done with fighting, Even if anyone came to shoot him, he would refuse to fight. He then offered to sell me the best part of his land, where there was good water for an out-station. I shall never forget that great gathering, and Nematik gesticulating earnestly as he urged his people to take the Missionary's word and give up fighting. It was a glorious day, and we felt more than rewarded for our eleven-and-a-half hours' tramping.

While I was away, Mrs Paton and the teachers put the finishing touches on our new Church. It measured 45 feet by 25, and we wondered how long it would be before we had enough worshippers to fill it. Our hope was in God, and we had not many years to wait till it was far too small to hold the people, whom He gathered to Himself out of Heathenism. The following day was a Sabbath, and we opened and dedicated our new Church. Six of our Tanna converts took part in the services. It was a fitting crown to months of weary toil, and our hearts were full of joy that day.

Then came the steamer, and a month's happy work on Aniwa. At two o'clock one morning

we left Aniwa again, and had a long pull out to the ship in the dark. Mr and Mrs Gillies were on board, and we were glad to welcome them as fellow-labourers on Tanna, as they were to be Mr Watt's colleagues. At Weasisi, Mr Macmillan came ashore with the joyful news that he had just baptised eight of his people. Our hearts were stirred beyond all telling. Surely the dawn was breaking on Tanna at last.

We brought with us from Aniwa a teacher for Loaneai, a shore village three miles north of Lenakel. He was Litsi's son, and was called Numakai after the famous old Chief. He was the finest athlete on all Aniwa, and turned out to be one of our very ablest teachers.

We found all going on well on our return to Lenakel. The candidates had all kept firm during our absence, though great pressure had been brought to bear upon them by the heathen. At Loinio there had been a heathen dance or sing-sing, and this is always a time of special danger for new converts. But while the heathen danced Lomai gathered the worshippers together for prayer, and the Father kept His own.

But we had bad news from the Iounmene. One section of the tribe had revived the bitter feelings against their enemies, and insisted upon war. But Nematik, the old chief who had so strongly declared for peace on our last visit,

absolutely refused to allow any fighting. As long as he lived, peace was assured. But the war-party determined to have fighting at any cost, so they sent two men to bring Nematik to a great talk. Nematik went with them to give his voice for peace. But the whole thing was a treacherous plot, and at a spot agreed upon three rifles rang out, and Nematik fell with three bullets through his body. He was killed because he had accepted the Gospel message of peace. He was our best friend among the inland tribes. It was a dastardly deed, and our hearts were very heavy that night.

The next morning we set out for the Iounmene, taking Tom with us. The first village seemed to be utterly deserted, but gradually one woman after another emerged from her hiding-place. Then a shout was heard, and in a moment, as if by magic, the village was again as empty and deserted as before. It was discovered, however, that the shout was that of a friend, and the women again appeared. Two men now came upon the scene, and asked us to follow them to the main body of fighters. The Chief and his warriors were encamped just under the brow of Nematik's hill, while eight or ten of the men were thrown out as skirmishers. Hither and thither they darted : never still for a moment, except when a warrior lifted his musket and fired

into the bush. They were feeling for the enemy, in case they were lurking in the scrub. It was a sight to be long remembered. The faces of the men were full of fierce excitement, but they received us very kindly. The Chief explained that they did not want to fight, but that the murder of his friend Nematik had forced it upon him. I suggested that we should hold a service, but he said—

“Not here, man he come close up shoot you me.”

So he left one or two men to watch the road, and drew off the rest of his warriors to the village. There we talked and prayed with them, and they listened attentively. They promised to try and end the fighting.

We now turned our thoughts to Loaneai. We had bought a piece of ground some time before, and we now began to clear it with a view to building an out-station. At first we had some difficulty in getting the natives to work properly, but in the end they did well.

While we were busy at this work, news came to us that the people at Loanatit were now against the Worship, and did not want us to go back. Lomai and others rallied round us, and we sailed to Loanatit to see if the rumour was true. A lad called Koiel met us on the beach and led us up to the village. We found that the people were

all away at their plantations on the other side of the ravine. Koiel yelled across the news of our arrival, and becoming more and more excited as he warmed to the subject, he abruptly closed by turning round and hugging me! And this on the edge of a precipice! Answering yells came back from the other side, and soon all the gullies and hills around rang with yells. In a few minutes a band of savages arrived and received us joyfully. We all went down to the beach and had a long talk under the banyan tree there. The rumour was not true, and to show their good faith they sold us a piece of land for an out-station. After a service we started back to Lenakel with joyful hearts. A head wind made our pull a long and weary one. We were now praying constantly for a teacher to be sent to us for Loanatit.

Meanwhile the Iounmene went on fighting, and every now and again news came of another victim. How we longed for the day when the peace of Jesus would reign in the land, and the love of God be shed abroad in the hearts of the people.

CHAPTER XII

BATTLING WITH HEATHENISM

THE year 1897 closed at Lenakel amid the horrors of war. But it also closed with a marked increase of the worshipping party. Heathenism was rampant; but the Christian party was becoming more aggressive, and the outlook was brighter than it had ever been.

Feeling that the time had now come for our people to unite in a determined onslaught upon Heathenism, I intimated one Sabbath that we would spend two whole days a week preaching the Gospel among the more distant tribes. I called for volunteers to go with us, on Tuesdays and Thursdays, to this work. The response was cheering, and twice a week we were able to lead out a small band of Tannese evangelists—men who knew what Heathenism was, and who had begun to feel the power of the Gospel throbbing in their pulses. Our tramps were sometimes far afield, and our audiences varied greatly. But, by this system of touring, we were able to bring the Gospel within regular hearing of a population of at least 1500. It was often weary and toilsome

work, and I believe it had not a little to do with the breaking up of Mr Hume's health and my own; but it was a necessary work, and opened up the country to the Gospel as nothing else could have done. It prepared the way for all our out-stations, and it made the Worship the most aggressive force on West Tanna. It kept us in constant touch with the heathen in all parts of our district, and it trained up a fine body of native evangelists and preachers.

At length, as the work of teaching and translation grew at the head station, we were able to devote only one day a week to itinerating. But by that time we were strong enough to send out two bands, Mr Hume leading the one, and I the other. Then as our numbers grew our bands increased to five or six, and we then reached more heathen in one day than we did before in two or three.

One day I said to Lomai, as we parted in the evening after a weary day's tramping—

“Well, Lomai, I suppose you very tired now?”

With a bright smile he answered, “Yes, but my heart no tired.”

And truly Lomai did heroic service. He was ably helped by Iavis, Numanian, Nelbini, and Tom. These men never failed us, and were constantly with our faithful teachers and ourselves in all the work.

Mr. Hume

Mr. F. Paton



Lomai

GROUP OF LENAKEL HELPERS

Numanian

Another day Lomai said to me—

“Now I begin to understand why Missionary come out along different country. When I see these men lie about, all the same, and no listen good along word belong Jesus, my heart very sore for them. Now I understand.”

Lomai was growing in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus.

About this time Iuiap died. We felt his death keenly, as he had been so prominently associated with our landing. So far as we know he remained a Heathen to the last, though he was most friendly to us and always listened with keen interest to the Gospel. Who knows but that some dim spark of the Divine Life had been kindled in the deep darkness of his soul? The ever-merciful Father knows, and we leave Iuiap to Him.

His tribe buried him on Sabbath, and invited us to attend. They had dug a deep grave, and then hollowed out a place in the side for his body to lie in. Just before they filled in the grave, one of his wives cut down his yams and then threw his axe into the grave. We sang “There is a Happy Land” in Tannese, and I prayed, and then the grave was filled in. After the funeral, we all gathered under Iuiap’s banyan tree, a great congregation, and I addressed them most solemnly.

Iuiap’s death was followed by much “netik ” talk

on the part of the Heathen. One night Jimmie Ierapuia, who now became Chief in Iuiap's place, broke into Mr Worthington's store, and stole a good deal of money and goods. His idea was evidently to get cartridges and means to pay his allies. A day or two after he declared war on Iawak, a powerful Chief in the next village. And this was how they declared it: three men hid themselves near Iawak's water-springs, at the head of a lovely glen. Soon a woman, with her babe and a little girl, came to draw water. Out blazed the rifles, and the woman fell dead, the little girl ran into the bush with the blood pouring from her arm, but the babe was missed. The inhuman wretches then shot the helpless babe, and made good their escape. A few mornings later, Iawak and Iakin, an allied Chief, stole up to Jimmie's people in the dark and shot two men. One fell dead, and the other dragged himself away. I came upon the scene shortly afterwards, and saw the murderers on their return, but of course they denied the deed. I then hurried home and got bandages and carbolic to dress the wounded man, but he would have none of my medicine. He trusted to the Heathen doctors, with the result that he died a few days after.

Jimmie was a villain of the first rank. To his own Heathen vices, he added the European vices which he had learned in Queensland. He was

not even a good fighter, though he was always stirring up his tribe to deeds of darkness. When Jimmie lost his two warriors he got into a state of great fear, and gave us part of the money he had stolen from Mr Worthington's store to return to its owner. He also expressed a great desire to take the Worship, if only his enemies would let him alone.

We constantly visited both sides, and urged them to peace, but the war dragged on week after week, and every now and then a man or woman was shot. Each side blamed the other, and probably both were at fault. The tribes for miles around were drawn into it, and donned the war paint. They tried hard to induce the followers of Tom and Iavis to join them, but the Christian party was strong enough to keep these two tribes clear. Yet, though our hearts were often sick with horror at the deeds done in the name of war, there was another side to the picture which must not be overlooked. In times of peace, those who did not want to hear the Gospel bolted into the bush when we drew near a village ; but during the war they were compelled to remain within the village for safety. In this way we had access to the worst gangs of savages for miles around, and they listened respectfully to the Gospel. They also saw how fearlessly and freely the Worshippers were able to go about, and they could not help

drawing a contrast between the blessings of the Gospel and their own unhappy condition. It made some, at any rate, long to have done with Heathenism and its terrors.

In the middle of this war a boat arrived from Aniwa, with the sad news of Kamasiteia's death. He was by far the ablest and best man on the island; he was the Lomai of Aniwa. There was no one else who could fill his place, and his death greatly crippled the work. The news was a great blow to us all, for we had learned to love and revere the man.

Soon after this, a determined effort was made by the Worshippers to put an end to Jimmie's fighting. They were to gather next morning and march in a body to the scene of war. But when the day broke, no Worshippers appeared; so Mr Hume and the teachers and I set out alone, and visited both sides, and earnestly prayed with the leaders. I found that one of Jimmie's Chiefs had forbidden the Worshippers to intervene, and that this was the reason why they kept away. The next morning I preached on "O, thou of little faith," and reproved our people for their fear. I asked them whether they would obey a Heathen Chief or Jesus Christ. They were greatly ashamed and hung their heads. After the service they told Lomai to ask me if I would go up with them next morning. Lomai had waited for them the day

before at an appointed meeting-place, but, as they did not turn up, he thought that I had changed the day, and so went home. When he discovered the real cause he was wroth with them, and told them what he thought of their lack of faith. Then he came to me and said—

“I very shamed to bring you this word again, Misi Paton, for I no savey that the others tell you lie yesterday. I wait for them at Lokuaihwai; and because they no come I think you change the day. Suppose I know that they no come, I come straight along you.”

And I knew that Lomai was not to blame.

Messengers were sent out in all directions, and next morning, through the pouring rain, a long line of men filed into Jimmie's village. We asked for representatives to go with us to Iawak's village for a conference. After some urging on our part, they agreed to this. We then marched across the fighting ground, singing in Tannese—

Onward, Christian Soldiers,
 Marching as to war.
 With the Cross of Jesus
 Going on before :
 Christ the Royal Master
 Leads against the foe ;
 Forward into battle,
 See, His banners go !

Iawak and his warriors received us graciously, and after an animated conference he agreed to

give up the war, if the other side would pledge themselves to keep the peace. Messengers were then sent back to Jimmie's tribe for Tubas and Loanamam, two of their leaders, to come and seal the compact. The messengers returned to say that Tubas and Loanamam agreed to the terms, but were afraid to risk their lives in the enemy's village. A more influential deputation was then sent to bring them, for we felt that the peace would not be assured without their presence. Still the Chiefs refused to come, but instead they sent some under-chiefs. This time I went back myself, and earnestly pled with them to come. Loanamam now pleaded a sore foot, but Tubas at last agreed to come. Iawak and Tubas then hurled hot words at each other, each grasping his loaded rifle. The warriors gathered behind their leaders, and between them stood the Christian party. The atmosphere became very heated, and Iakin on Iawak's side glared fierce anger at Tubas. I was becoming somewhat anxious, and turned to ask Lomai how he thought the matter was going. Lomai was standing under the banyan with the rain running down his face, but he beamed all over, as he turned to me and said—

“It's all right, it will do them good to get all that bad stuff out; it's got to come out.”

And so it proved, for hot words were followed

by mutual explanations, and then we held a united service, the leaders shook hands, and the horrid war was over.

The joy was tremendous. Not even the torrents of rain damped their spirits. The women waved their arms and shouted with delight. The men blazed off their muskets, and Iawak killed his fattest pig. It was the most wonderful day we had had on Tanna! God wrought a great victory for His people, and never did we feel the Divine Presence more real. The next day, some of the warriors worshipped with us in a great thanksgiving service at Lenakel.

But another war had been threatening to break out for some time. The enemies of the Loinio tribe had broken the promise which they gave to Titonga and myself, when we visited them. They made repeated raids, and on New Year's day a band of them stole up to a village belonging to an ally of Iavis. They could see no man about, but two little girls were eating fruit and swinging on the branch of a tree. They were so happy, and the sound of their innocent prattle and laughter drew the warriors to their tree. The sight of two such happy, harmless little things would have softened less inhuman hearts, but not so the "noble savage." They fired and then ran for their lives. The elder girl fell with a thud to the ground and her life-blood stained the green

carpet of ferns. The little sister was missed, but her screams of terror drew the heartless murderers back, and a bullet stilled her cries. A few days afterwards we stood under the tree and saw the blood stains, and our hearts bled for our little Tanna sisters. Fathers and mothers, who love your little girls, help us in God's name to battle against such devil's work! You can, if you will.

The father did all he could to stir up the tribe to war. But Iavis was War Chief, and he refused to sanction any fighting. As long as he was Chief, there could be no war; so the war party attempted to depose Iavis and put another man in his place. But no other name could command such authority as that of Iavis, and he remained as before the War Chief of Loinio. Iavis and Lomai then came to me for some Christmas cards, which they sent to their enemies as a symbol of peace, and invited them to a great peace conference at Towar Ribor, a mountain right in the heart of Tanna. The enemies accepted the symbol, and fixed a day for the conference. When the day came, a great company of clothed people set out for Towar Ribor. The direct road had long been closed by war, and we made a long journey round. When we neared the spot our people halted and some talking took place. I was just going on, when Lomai came to me and said—

"Some of the people are afraid. Iavis wants you to pray that their fear may depart."

I then turned back, and after prayer our people plucked up courage and we marched on. A little further on, I noticed Tausi looking very intently up into a banyan tree that stood beside the track. He then called out, and I saw an armed savage up among the branches, earnestly watching our party as it climbed the hill. The enemies had posted him there to give the alarm, in case we looked hostile. They wanted to guard themselves against treachery. He seemed quite satisfied, however, with our peaceful looks, and still more by the fact that we were unarmed. Quickly scrambling down, he led us into the village square on top of Towar Ribor. Here we found about three hundred armed savages, most of them horribly painted.

A long talk then took place, peace counsels prevailed, and a further conference was arranged for the following Monday. This time, we opened the direct road to Towar Ribor. By God's blessing these two meetings ended a generation of fighting, and not only was peace declared, but arrangements were made for the enemies to return to villages from which they had been driven out so long ago. These two great achievements made the Christian party the strongest and most united force on West Tanna.

CHAPTER XIII

GAINING GROUND

A NEW era at Lenakel was marked by the arrival of a printing press. When Mr Anderson, who was on his way to Santo, told me that there was one on board for us, I fairly shouted for joy. This was by far the best gift we had yet received for our Mission work. And no human measure can tell the forces that flowed from that little press.

We lost no time in getting it set up, and the first thing we printed was a translation of the Lord's Prayer. I took a copy and gave it to Lomai, who was outside talking to some people. He slowly spelled out the first word, and then the second more excitedly, and at the third he burst out with delight, "Nuparhien, nakaran tetar!" (Truly it is our language). His delight knew no bounds. Then we printed copies of the alphabet, and five days after the press was set up we began to print the Gospel of Mark in the language of Lenakel. For months we had longed and prayed for a press, and now it was joyful work to see the Word of God taking

printed form in the mother tongue of the people. It was a slow process, for we could only print one page at a time, but the result was worth any labour.

The people soon heard about the wonderful new iron thing that made white paper black with writing, and they came in crowds to watch me at work. It caused even more wonder to them than the organ. One day, Tausi watched me for a while and then exclaimed—

“What name? Black man he no savey; plenty work along make book, and we no look out good along him!”

Another day some of the school people asked if they might see “the thing that made books.” I showed them the blank paper, and one simultaneous howl of wonder and delight greeted the first page, as it became suddenly transformed before them.

It took nearly three months, along with other work, to complete the 200 copies which constituted our first edition of Mark. I gave the first bound copy to Lomai. He became very tender, and handled it as if it were a living thing that could be hurt. Then he gathered a little band around him, and, sitting on a box, he read God’s Word in his own language to his own people. Our hearts were deeply moved as we looked upon Lomai and his eager listeners. Never shall I forget the expression of joyful

tenderness on that once heathen face, as he spelled out the story of Jesus in his own mother tongue. Such a sight was more than a reward for all the weary labour of the past months.

But more than Lomai were stirred up by the printing of Mark. It gave an impetus to our whole school work. The people had now an object in learning to read, and most of them made great progress. Others, again, who were too old ever to learn to read, began to learn the pages off by heart. It was a pretty sight, on Sabbath afternoons, to see little groups of natives, scattered all over the Mission grounds spelling out the Gospel message. Those more advanced were soon surrounded by the slower ones. Words cannot describe the uplift to our whole work which came through the printing of Mark.

As soon as Mark was finished I put a hymn book and catechism through the press. Then, later on, a second and revised edition of Mark was printed, containing 500 copies. So that our little press was not idle.

One day, as we were translating Matthew together, Lomai said to me, "Now I can make it more straight. Before my heart not right, and I no get the Word of Jesus straight. Now my heart right a little bit, and I got the Word of Jesus more straight. By-and-bye we get him altogether straight."

Dear old Lomai, the Lenakel Mission owes more to him than words can tell.

Shortly after the year began we had a delightful visit from Mr Watt, who walked overland from Weasisi. His visit stimulated the natives as well as ourselves, but was all too short. Lomai gathered a crew, and at 4.30 one morning we set out for Port Resolution to take Mr Watt back. Mrs Paton became very ill in the boat and is not likely ever to forget that long day's journey. A five hours' pull brought us to Kwamera, where we had lunch and a delightful rest. And then began the real battle of the day, for we had six hours' pulling against a head wind and heavy sea. The scenery along the coast was lovely, and we startled shoals of flying fish, six turtles, two sharks and one whale. But the loveliest sight of all was when we saw the lovely waters of Port Resolution opening out before our tired eyes. We were not sorry to lay aside our oars, for our hands were sorely blistered.

We intended to return next day, but a strong wind and high sea kept us close prisoners in very happy quarters for two days longer. Mr Watt and Mr and Mrs Gillies made our stay as pleasant as it was profitable.

On the Friday, wind and sea had gone down a good deal, so we ventured out. Mr Watt accompanied us as far as Kwamera in his boat. There

we had an hour's rest and then set sail for Lenakel. Mr Watt walked round the point, and stood watching us as long as we could see him. There we left him still standing, a lonely, heroic figure.

We had now a heavy sea, but the wind was fair, and we bowled along nicely. As we drew near Laiuk, a point about half way to Lenakel, a heavy squall struck us, and it became so thick that we could hardly make out the land, though we were quite close to the reef. It made us anxious at the time, but we afterwards learned that an armed band of men were hiding behind the rocks on that very point to shoot us as we passed. The squall hid the boat from their view, and by the time it cleared we were far out of reach of their guns. It was a merciful deliverance, of which we knew nothing till long afterwards.

Towards evening the wind fell, and we had a long pull home in the dark. When we drew near Lenakel, we skirted the reef to find the passage. We could see nothing but the dark outline of the hills, but the roar of the breakers guided us, while every now and then a white gleam warned us that we were too near and must head out. At length we raised the boat cry, and joyful yells answered us from the shore. Soon a huge fire was blazing on the beach at the landing, and we got safely through the passage. Our crew had done nobly, and we got a great welcome from our people.

The next great event was the settlement of Numakai at Loaneai. We launched the *Pioneer* one morning and took Numakai and his family over, a great company of people going by the shore road. As soon as we had landed his goods, we gathered under the fine banyan tree which stood beside the house we had built for him. Lomai and Tom spoke earnestly to the people, and we had a good service. The old Chief of Loaneai put on a shirt for the occasion, while his son adorned himself with a vest and a straw hat. They were the first of the local tribe to put on any clothing. The people heartily welcomed their teacher, and it was a great joy to us to plant out our first out-station.

The following week we set out in the *Pioneer* for Loanatit to build a second out-station there, although as yet we had no teacher for it. It is about twelve miles north of Lenakel by sea. We had a fair wind and arrived about noon. Two little girls rushed out up to their waists into the sea, with outstretched hands to welcome Mrs Paton. The people crowded round us, and their welcome was the warmest we had yet had on Tanna. Willing hands carried ashore our goods, including our faithful goat Peggotty. Peter, Tom and Harry, the leading Chiefs, were delighted when we told them that we had come to stay a week. The women and girls fairly clung to Mrs Paton

Many of them had never seen a white woman before. We were going to put up a temporary shelter, but Peter showed us a fine, dry cave, and we decided to camp in it till our house was finished. Our sail made the front wall, and with many hands to help us we soon had the cave partitioned off into three rooms—a dining-room and two bedrooms. By evening, we were completely established in our new quarters. The day closed with a service at the mouth of our cave, and the people listened earnestly to the glad news of Jesus.

That night we slept little, for we found that there were other inhabitants of the cave who resented our intrusion—crabs! To hear a crab making straight for one's toes in the darkness is a wonderful stimulant! But we had a good rest for all that.

The next morning, we began building operations. Peter and a few men and women offered their services for work. Tom was busy preparing for a sing-sing, but he assured me again and again that it was no unfriendly spirit that kept him away.

“Heart belong me fellow good along you, we want help you, only we make sing-sing, that's all.”

And he showed his interest by sending his wife to work instead, while he himself always attended the



CAMP AT LENAHEL

Yalemyan

Lomai



THE CAVE AT LOANATIT



services. In five days our little three-roomed native house was finished, and we moved into it, not sorry to leave the cave to the undisputed possession of the crabs. The house was built right on top of a rock and was beautifully shaded by trees. It faced the sea with its lovely, cool breezes, and was a lovely romantic spot. The easy road to it was through our cave, the only other approach being up the face of the rock.

It was a happy week at Loanatit. The people were so simple and warm-hearted, and so eager for the Gospel. We learned to love Peter, he was so quiet and earnest. Three times a day the people gathered round us, and we read and explained to them the Word of God. Even before we left some had begun to pray, and their prayer was, "Jesus, help us"—a short prayer, but one that must have gone straight to the Saviour's heart.

On the Saturday we explored southwards in the *Pioneer*, and on the Sabbath we went inland right up into the heart of the mountains. The heavy rains had made the roads slippery, and we had to help ourselves up by catching hold of the reeds and long grass that grew along the track. An old Chief who was struggling up the mountain with a heavy load on his back—a most unusual thing for a Tanna man—was chuckling away to himself, "Very good road belong me, splendid road, oh

very nice, ah good fellow road belong me!" His sentences were punctuated by slips and stumbles. He evidently had a sense of humour. We found the population to be very thin and scattered among the mountains. The view from the top was extensive, as most of the hills were bare of trees; instead they were covered with lovely grass. The valleys were wooded and well watered.

It was late afternoon when we got back, and a youth James was sitting on top of the last hill just above our camp. As I came up he said, "Very good you come quick; Misis, she want you too much."

He looked so sorrowful that I asked, in some alarm, if Mrs Paton was ill. "I dunno," replied James, "I think she plenty sorry along you."

When I got down to the beach, I found that James's alarm had been caused by seeing Mrs Paton come out and look up the mountain track pretty often, as we were much later than I had expected.

Monday we spent evangelizing along the north coast of Tanna. All went well till we were returning, when the crew stopped rowing just at the critical moment in the passage to watch a fine breaker that was gathering astern. The result was that the wave broke over us, but beyond a good ducking no harm was done.

On Wednesday we returned to Lenakel, leaving Peter in charge of our home till a teacher could be

settled. A head wind and heavy sea delayed us, and we put into Loaneai just after dark. Numakai and his wife got us some nice, warm tea, which greatly refreshed us, and we had an hour's rest. The wind had now died down, so we put out to sea once more, Mrs Paton at the helm and the rest of us at the oars. An hour's good pulling brought us to Lenakel, where we found all well and in good heart.

A few weeks later we again visited our friends at Loanatit. They were as eager as ever for a teacher, and four or five of them begged me to take them to Lenakel to learn the Worship. As we were short of food at the time, I took only two, Peter and Jack. On the way back Jack pointed out to me a place where he and a friend of his had shot five people in one day. I said to him—

“That conduct belong devil, Jack.”

“Yes,” he quite agreed, “they bad fellow man. They come shoot me fellow. No good they make all the same.”

They were, however, a very quiet, docile couple, and it was a pleasure to teach them, they seemed so eager to learn.

CHAPTER XIV

SUNSHINE AND SHADOW

ABOUT this time my wife became very ill, and in spite of all treatment she grew weaker and weaker. In such circumstances it was no small comfort when the steamer arrived to find that Dr and Mrs Sandilands were on board. They were on their way to Port Resolution, but the doctor very kindly came across several times, and his advice checked the symptoms.

A few weeks later the steamer again called to take us to Synod. Our hearts beat as we drew near the ship, and we picked out one after another of our brother Missionaries. There was my brother waving his hat, and Mr Robertson, the hero of Erromanga, and Dr Bowie from the far north, and many others who were dear to us—heroes all of them, battling for God and for man. It was a glorious reunion.

At dawn next morning we reached Anelcauhat, and Mr Macmillan came off for us in his new boat, looking as happy as a bridegroom should. On the shore Mrs Heyer was awaiting us, and mother and daughter were soon locked in each

other's arms. Mrs Heyer had come down from Melbourne by the Sydney steamer, which went direct to Aneityum, and hence our meeting there. The voyage and the excitement were too much for my wife in her weak state, and she again became very ill. But we had no lack of medical skill and kindness, and she soon began to mend.

At midnight on a Wednesday we left Aneityum, and at daylight we were off Lenakel. Hard good-byes had now to be said, and then we pulled ashore. The natives gave Mrs Heyer a warm welcome, and were greatly interested to see Mrs Paton's mother.

Soon after Synod, we had the joy of opening a village Church at Lapuna. Numanian was the leader of the work of building it, and the Church did credit to his zeal and energy. At the opening service Lomai read a portion out of Mark, and then expounded it with great force and insight. At the close the people made a collection, as a gift to Numanian and his fellow-workers.

An answer now came to our prayers for Loanatit, as the steamer brought a teacher and his wife from Erromanga, and a young fellow to help him. None of them knew any English, and we could only speak through signs. However, we got on very well.

One morning we set sail for Loanatit, accompanied by Mrs Heyer. On the way we called at

Loaneai, and found Numakai well, and the work prospering. At Loanatit the people gave us a right royal welcome. They were glad to see Peter and Jack again, and they grinned with delight when they found that we had a teacher for them. On the top of the hill on which our little house stood, we gathered them for service. Then they went off to their plantations to gather yams and food, which I bought for Yalemyau, their teacher. To Yalemyau's surprise and delight, he found a man at Loanatit who could speak Erromangan. They became fast friends at once, and Yalemyau was soon quite at home with the people. In the evening we again had service, and for the first time Peter spoke a few words. He was very nervous, but it was a good beginning. Then we slung our hammocks, and turned in for the night.

Early next morning, we committed Yalemyau and his little company to the Father's love and care. Then we had a long day's pulling back to Lenakel against a heavy sea. It was a happy settlement, the result of much prayer and many toilsome journeys by sea and land. And, from the very first, God's blessing rested upon the work.

All this time my wife was improving slowly in health. But Dr Sandilands still considered it necessary for her to go at once to the Colonies for a few months' change, so we reluctantly decided that she should return with her mother to Mel-

bourne. We were not glad, therefore, to hear the steamer's whistle on the 13th of May, for it meant some hard good-byes. It was a comfort, however, to find that Dr and Mrs Lamb were on board. The steamer was in a hurry, and five minutes after we reached the vessel's side we pulled away again, leaving Mrs Paton and Mrs Heyer on board. It was a silent pull back, and it was to a silent and empty home that we returned.

A few days later, Lomai and Tom and some of our candidates came with us on a three days' tour among the Iounmene and their enemies. For some hours we tramped through reeds and rough bush, as the tracks had been closed by war, and we were the first to re-open them. Then we came upon a man in his garden, and he guided us to the nearest village. It was a real bush village, and the people did stare at us! We sent them to the plantations to hunt up the rest of the people, while we had lunch beside a beautiful water-spring. It bubbled out from the side of a rock, and a savage filled a large leaf and gave me to drink. He told me that it was the Devil's water. I asked him how that was, and he told me its history. Long ago the Devil and his wife were tramping along the great high road to North Tanna. With the instinct of a true Tanna man, the Devil made his wife carry the water. All went well until they came to this spot, where the

ground is somewhat uneven ; the poor woman stumbled. The water was all spilt, but the rocky hollow beside the track caught it, and on they tramped. At last the Devil became hot and thirsty, and turning round for the first time he asked his wife for some water. " Temet " (It is empty), she replied. And Temet they call the spring to this day. I could not help wishing that the Devil had left more such beneficent traces on Tanna !

By this time the people had all gathered, and we told them of the Water of Life, and of the source from Whom it flowed. It was a new and wonderful story to them, and they listened as those who cannot take it in. But some glimmering of a Father's love may have pierced the darkness of their souls. We prayed that it might be so.

From this village, willing guides led us to the next. Here again the people stared at us, some from behind trees in the distance. But at length they became more trustful and gathered round us, as we sang to them, and told them of Jesus and His love. Our track now lay to the north-west, and we soon found ourselves on the outskirts of the Iounmene. Lomai was very happy, and said to me with a beaming face—

" We go right in the Devil's eye to-day, I think he have a sore head to-night ! "

After preaching in five villages we came to Lokavit, where Tom's married sister was living.

As it was now dark we decided to camp here for the night, and some young fellows went off to their plantations to get sweet potatoes for our tea. Then they showed us a hut where we could sleep. But before turning in the people gathered round our camp fire, and we had an impressive service.

That night, Lomai's slumbers were disturbed by a rat, at which he vainly aimed terrible blows. He was stretched out on a mat just under my hammock. Titonga lay near the door, while Nalin and Nakohma lay along the sides of the hut.

"Did you sleep well?" I asked Lomai, as I looked over the edge of my hammock, in the morning.

"No," said Lomai; "One rat he come and growl plenty along me last night. I think he say 'What for you hang up tucker where I can't reach him?'"

Lomai referred to the lunch basket, which he had taken care to hang high up the night before. And what with insects, pigs, dogs and flying-foxes, I did not sleep much either.

After a breakfast of cocoanut and biscuit, we set out for a village further north. Here we found a man called Koman, who had worked with Lomai in Queensland. He seemed very glad indeed to see us, and said—

"I hear good word in Queensland, but when

I come back here the old fashion too strong for me, and I close up road to heaven. Now I plenty glad you come open that road again."

A sad, pathetic story! Koman then showed us a fine site for an out-station, and I decided to buy it next time I came. I also promised to send a teacher to Lokavit as soon as ever I could get one.

When we got back to our camp, we found that a royal dinner of chicken and sweet potato had been cooked for us. After doing full justice to this, we set out for home over hills and across gullies, preaching as we went along.

Soon after we got home, old Tamanu died. She was a member of our Candidates' class. Titonga and I went up to the village, and I shall never forget the scene which met our eyes. On the one side of the hut four men were digging the grave; on the other the women were cutting up three pigs, and preparing a great feast for the diggers. They finished their preparations just in time to come round the hut, and cry at the funeral. And yet they were truly sorry. But their sorrow is like the sorrow of children, easily diverted and soon forgotten.

Our next experience was somewhat rough and exciting. We sailed in the *Pioneer* for a week's work at Loanatit. On the way we called in at Loaneai with some yams for Numakai. The

passage is a bad one, and the sea was very rough. Just as we got to the critical place coming out, a wave struck the boat and knocked two oars out of the rowlocks. This rendered us helpless for the moment, and before we could get our oars righted another wave lifted us on to an ugly rock. We were now, humanly speaking, at the mercy of the sea, for Mr Hume was thrown violently across the gunwale of the boat, and Noumeta had his oar carried away. The next wave lifted up one side of the boat till she was almost perpendicular, and then instead of capsizing, as we fully expected, she slid off the rock into deep water. Meanwhile Mr Hume had regained his seat, and Noumeta had got out another oar, so we pulled out into the open sea. There we thanked God for His wonderful deliverance, and waited for our oar as it drifted outside the breakers. A hasty examination showed that the boat was not damaged, so we once more hoisted sail for Loanatit, where we arrived safely and found all well.

While we were holding service, a French labour-schooner passed us on her way to Black Beach. Then a second schooner passed us, followed by three boats. The first was the *Jeanette* on her way to Noumea, and the second was our old friend the *Caroline* from Vila. We learned next morning that the *Caroline's* boats had been fired

upon just round the point, and one of her crew seriously wounded. We went on board the *Jeanette* and heard the particulars of the affair, as the *Caroline* had gone right on to Vila during the night for medical aid. We then hastened to Nalebot, where the shooting had taken place. At first the natives bolted, but when they saw that it was the Mission boat they came down. They were greatly excited, but I got them to sit down and make a clear statement of the whole incident. I put the statement into writing, and they signed their marks in presence of Mr Hume and myself as witnesses. I cross-examined them very severely, but their story was consistent throughout. An Erromangan had run away from the French boat, and an armed party from the *Caroline* searched the shore for him. Failing to find the runaway they seized upon the nearest, who happened to be the Chief, and stated that they would hold him as hostage till the Erromangan turned up. The Chief's son then ran forward with his gun, and shots were exchanged on both sides, with the result that one of the native crew of the French boat was seriously wounded. As Nalebot was in Mr Macmillan's district, we went on to Loanbakel, to see if Mr Forlong could take this statement on to Weasisi, in case the man-of-war should call there. But we found Mr Forlong suffering from

fever, so we pushed on ourselves. We had a long pull in the dark, but at last we sighted Mr Macmillan's light away up on the hill, and we carefully felt our way in to the landing. A hospitable welcome and happy fellowship awaited us there.

Next morning we went down to the beach intending to make an early start, but to our grief we found that the *Pioneer* had dragged her anchor in the night and been swamped. There she lay, half buried in the sand, with just the tips of her bow and stern above the water. There was nothing for it but to wait till the tide went down. Then we set to work, in real earnest, to dig her out and get her afloat. The sea kept breaking over her side even at low tide, and washing in as much sand as we took out, so we made a breakwater with the sail. This enabled us to gain on the sand, and at last the good *Pioneer* was afloat once more, though sadly strained and leaking badly. Half-an-hour later we were pulling for North Tanna. The sun went down while we were still far from Loanbakel, and a heavy thunderstorm hurst over us. The darkness was so intense that we could not even see the breakers, and the lightning flashes revealed the dark outline of the hills for a moment, only to make the after darkness deeper. We tried in vain to find Mr Forlong's passage, and once an oar touched

the surf, we were so near the reef. We were just making up our minds for a rough night at sea, when a joyous shout burst from the crew. It was Mr Forlong's light, which appeared for a few seconds and then disappeared. But we now knew where we were. A flash of lightning revealed the white sand at the landing, and then we pulled slowly forward into a black wall of darkness. We could see nothing till the boat touched the sand, and then we all jumped into the water to keep her from being capsized in the surf. The sea was like warm water compared with the cold rain which had drenched us. I have seldom been in such awful darkness, and my heart rose to God for His goodness in bringing us safe to land. We found Mr Forlong better, and were soon enjoying the warm tea which he prepared for us.

Early next morning we returned to Loanatit, taking Mr Forlong with us. On the way we landed on the reef, and preached the Gospel to some men who had come down to fish.

After a night's rest at Loanatit, we set out for Lenakel. About half way a head wind met us, and for some hours we crept up the coast by beating. But about three o'clock the wind freshened to a gale, and the sea became mountainous, so we took down sail and pulled. Then began a tremendous struggle against wind and

sea, which lasted four and a half hours, and ended in a victory for the elements. We got within two miles of home, and then it blew such a gale that we had to give in. Our hands were skinned with pulling, and our strength was completely spent. There was nothing for it but to turn round and run before the wind with our sail double reefed. We tore through the water at a fearful pace. Tausi stood at the bow to keep a good look out, and I kept the helm. Mr Hume, Mr Forlong, and Noumeta were all ill, and it was an anxious time. At last the water became suddenly smoother, and we knew that we had rounded the great point and were now in the Black Beach Bay. All danger from the sea was now over, but we had to face a rough landing in the dark, and, wearied as we were with pulling, we fared badly. At midnight we reached Loanatit, and got safely through the outer passage but the wind and sea drove us on to a sunken rock inside. However, we got off again safely, and were soon ashore. We thanked God for our deliverance, and then threw ourselves down around a blazing fire, to await the daylight.

When we got back to Lenakel next day by walking overland from Black Beach Point, we found Lomai and our teachers mourning for us as lost. The natives at Loaneai had seen the boat

passing there just at dark, and when they found that we had not arrived at Lenakel next morning they made sure that we had perished in the storm. When we suddenly walked into the station the natives received us as from the dead. Lomai came rushing forward with both hands outstretched and said over and over again—

“Oh now my heart glad, me vary glad to see you back again.”

A few days later Captain Leah called in H.M.S. *Mildura*, to enquire into the shooting at Nalebot. He asked me to go up with him as guide, and we took Lomai as interpreter. The *Pioneer* was towed astern, and Lomai and one or two natives steered her, while Mr Hume and I remained on board the vessel. As the steamer went at a good pace, Lomai and the crew had some difficulty in keeping their seats in the boat, and they looked longingly at Mr Hume and me on deck. Lomai afterwards used this as an illustration and said to the people—

“In the boat we were unhappy and in fear of death, but when we looked to the man of war we saw Mr Paton and Mr Hume smiling and talking to the Captain. My heart then thought, Will it be like this at the last with some of us? Shall we be in pain and fear of death in the big fire, and see Misi and others happy in heaven? My friends, let us really give our hearts to Jesus, that

we may not deceive ourselves and come to such an evil plight."

We reached Nalebot just before sundown, and the natives decamped as soon as we appeared round the point. They thought that we were the French man of war. The Captain, Lomai and I climbed up the hill to the village, but it was quite deserted. The fires were still burning, and various articles were lying about, which the natives had dropped in their headlong flight. We then went a little distance inland, Lomai shouting that we were friends and not enemies. But if they heard us they made no response, and we had to go back to the ship without having seen a native. Next morning there was still no one to be seen, so we returned home. But I was able to tell the Captain the story the natives had given to me.

The *Ysobel* now arrived with cheering news that my wife had arrived safely in Melbourne, and was improving in health though still very weak. We had also the pleasure of welcoming Mr David Paterson, as a fellow worker to the New Hebrides.

When the steamer left, our candidates and I set out on a three days' walking tour through the Iounmene on to Loanatit and back. We bought the ground which Koman had offered to us at Lokavit for our third out-station, and we now began to pray that a teacher might be sent us to occupy it.

I now completed the printing of the hymn book, for which I charged the natives 6d. a copy to cover cost of paper and start a book fund. Lomai and I then continued together the translation of Matthew.

CHAPTER XV

FIRST-FRUITS

IT was now drawing near our Communion season, and our thoughts and prayers were directed towards the sifting of Candidates for baptism. It was serious and responsible work, but in the end we had no doubt. Eleven were chosen, and I formed them into a special class for the last few weeks.

Iavis now gained his final victory over Heathenism. He had already given up his second and third wives, and his last battle was against a very serious superstition which had held him in bondage for years. Long ago he was very ill, and a Tanna man gave him medicine which cured him. This man told him that he must not eat food prepared by another, and that he must not touch the leaves of certain trees or else he would die. Iavis believed him, and from that day became a slave to these commands. He would go all day without food, rather than risk eating anything cooked by another. After he had given up his extra wives, Iavis began to feel that this fear of his was not right, and he

made it a matter of earnest prayer. He then entered upon a period of great conflict, but little by little his faith grew. At last he decided to end the struggle, and praying hard all the time, he walked up to the forbidden tree and clutched and crushed its leaves. Then he took some food cooked by another, and, praying hard, he ate it. From that day Iavis was delivered from his bondage, and rejoiced in the liberty of Christ.

Tom and his people left their village among the hills at this time, and came down and built a new village at Lenakel, so as to be near the Worship. This was a step in the right direction, and others gradually followed his example, until we had quite a large home population.

In the first week in August, we had special meetings every day, leading up to the great Communion day. The men cut down bread-fruit trees and made rough seats for the Church, while the women made cocoanut leaf mats to cover the floor.

At last the glad day dawned. From north and south and east the people came. All our worshippers were present, and many heathen from afar. At 8.30 the Candidates met for prayer, and at 9 o'clock the bell rang out its gladdest and most solemn call. In a few minutes the Church was crowded to the door, and the windows were black with eager faces. Our hearts



FIRST CANDIDATES CLASS

were very full and rose in thankfulness to God who had so drawn the people's hearts.

But there was one blank which we all felt, and I most of all; the seat at the organ was empty. It was a great sorrow to us that she, who had done so much, and suffered so much, to bring these people to Jesus, should be unable to sit down with us, as our first converts gathered around the Lord's Table. But God so willed, and though absent and sick in body, she was very present in spirit and in the hearts of the people. Never had they forgotten her in their prayers, and that Sabbath Lomai's voice grew husky, as he prayed—

“ Help Mrs Paton far away, that she may have joy to-day. Make her strong again that she may come back to us to teach us the word of Jesus. And hear her prayers for us at Lenakel on this great day.”

When our people were all gathered, our never to be forgotten service began. Mr Hume gave an earnest address to the people, and then I spoke solemn words to the Candidates, and put some questions to them which they answered standing. No words can tell what we felt as the eleven rose up to witness the good confession. It must have been something like the joy of the angels in heaven.

I then baptized them one by one. First came

Lomai, and as he stepped forward, with tears in his eyes, my own feelings surged within me. For was not Lomai the first of our spiritual children, and the most dearly loved? Through all the joys and sorrows of our life on Tanna he had stood by us, a brave, noble man, of iron will and tender heart, the most spiritual and Christlike of all our people. Next I baptized Naupum, his wife, an earnest, intelligent woman, who rose into a true leader among the women, and in after years proved a worthy helpmeet to Lomai. Then came Numanian and his wife, Lohman, a splendid couple. Numanian had now become a leader of the first rank among the Worshippers, and we hoped great things from him. Then came Tom Tanna and his wife, Ielo, another fine couple. Tom had outgrown his weaknesses, and had become a faithful helper in all the work, whose one aim was to serve Jesus, and win his fellows. Tom had been baptized in Queensland, so I simply admitted him. Tom was an example of what God could do with a naturally weak character, and he did noble service for West Tanna. Then came Iesua, the brightest and most loving of all the younger girls. She was at first one of the wildest, but now she was full of a beautiful earnestness. Then came Numanipan, an earnest, faithful woman. She was followed by Teniau, who gave herself to Jesus, while her husband was

still violently opposed to the Gospel, and who gradually won him for Christ. Then came Nelbini, who was once rather weak and unreliable, but who fast became one of our very best helpers, and won his whole village for Christ. Last of all came Iavis, the great War Chief, who had become one of the most childlike and beautiful of our native Christians, and stood next to Lomai in all the work. He was an untiring preacher of the Gospel, and used his great influence for one end only, the advancement of Christ's Kingdom. After the Candidates, I baptized Iolu, Lomai's little son, and Numanian's two children, Iata and Magia. Then we gathered round the Lord's Table, and enjoyed a blessed and holy feast, one to be remembered throughout all eternity.

Thus came and went a day for which we had long prepared. The day passed, but its influence remained. A new spirit of earnestness manifested itself among the people, and our members grew in knowledge and in grace, and the influence of their lives told upon the people. God gave us grand leaders in these men. They were the natural leaders in Heathenism, and now they became the spiritual leaders for Christ. Heathenism could never again be what it had been on West Tanna. It had received a deadly wound. Its death might be slow, but die it must. It could not long stand before the forces which had come into these lives.

Christ had formed them into His Church, and the gates of hell would not prevail against them. The Kingdom of Christ had begun, small as a mustard seed at present, but in this beginning of the new we saw the end of the old. God speed the day when every son and daughter of Tanna shall be gathered into His Church!

We now formed a members' class in addition to our Candidates' class, and studied the Acts of the Apostles. We also made the Gospel of Matthew, which Lomai and I had now translated, one of our main text books in all the classes.

One day, not long after this, Titonga came in and told me that Nausian wanted to shoot his wife. I was horrified and astounded, as Nausian was a leading member of our Candidates' class. I hurried up to the village, and a crowd collected to see what I would do. I asked Nausian if the report were true, and he hung his head as he answered that it was. I then asked him the reason. It was the demon of jealousy which had been aroused in his heart. His father, a cunning old Heathen, had told him that his wife was unfaithful. When I demanded his evidence he said that a young woman had told him. I at once sent for the woman, and meanwhile asked the wife to give her version of the thing. She protested her innocence, and pled for her life. The young woman now arrived, and I asked her

to state her evidence. She did so, but it utterly broke down under cross-examination. In fact, her story rather tended to prove the wife's innocence. I then sent for the old father, and he said that another old Heathen had told him. I sent for the second old man, and he declared that the father was lying. They then confessed that the whole thing was a trumped up story, without any foundation whatever in fact. By this time the woman had ceased to weep, and Nausian looked thoroughly ashamed of himself. I asked him what he thought of it now, and he said—

“It is a lie of the Devil.”

Then I let him know what I thought of his conduct. The old father came in for some warm remarks too. Then we held a service, and I contrasted the lying, crooked way of the Heathen with the truthful and just ways of the people of Jesus. The woman's life was saved, and the Heathen were cowed.

This great fall was a lesson which Nausian never forgot. From this time he became an out-and-out follower of Jesus, and a leader among his fellows. His name will occur again in these pages, to his honour.

After this we set out on another three days' walking tour among the inland northern tribes. The first night we spent at Lokavit, in a hut that they had built for us on the land which

I had bought for an out-station. Lokavit is high up on the mountain, and we could hardly sleep for cold that night. The people received us gladly, and again pled for a teacher.

Early next morning we set out for Loanatit, which we reached about noon. Yalemyau and his people were in good heart, and after service I bought in a good deal of native food for him. At the close of the first service I had just lain down in my hammock for a rest, when a woman came to the door and sat down. She opened her Gospel of Mark, and then looked appealingly at me. I could not resist such an appeal, so I got up, and we read a portion together. I found that she had made good progress, and was earnestly seeking for the light. She said, "Before, nekiuk (my heart) go all about, he no savey; now all clear, very glad."

Others also at Loanatit were seeking after Jesus.

In the beginning of September, Mr Hume and I left Lenakel for a few months' rest in the colonies, leaving the work in charge of our faithful teachers, under the general supervision of Mr Macmillan.

CHAPTER XVI

BACK TO TANNA

BACK to Tanna, and what a welcome! Before we reached the anchorage, our trusted leaders were bending to the oars in the *Pioneer*, and as they neared us a hearty British cheer sounded out their welcome. Dear old Lomai stood up in the boat, and eagerly scanned the faces of the ladies, and then looked enquiringly at me. "Where Mrs Paton?" There was keen disappointment when I told them that she was not strong enough to return with me.

"Ah, well," said Lomai, "he more better for her to wait till hot sun finish."

The next question was, "Misi Hume?" And I told them that he also would probably return next trip. A few hurried questions brought out the answers,—

"Altogether man he well. Worship he strong. Plenty people stop along shore."

Then we got into the boat, and willing arms pulled for the shore. There I got a welcome that made my throat very lumpy. The men, women and children rushed down to the water's edge and

stood with outstretched arms, uttering their plaintive cry of welcome. Then Tausi led them in a ringing cheer, and the moment the keel grated on the sand we were surrounded by a crowd of eager people. They thought that Mrs Paton was in the boat, and their disappointment was great. "Awe Misis Paton," they cried in their touching way. Mr Hume, too, was eagerly looked for. My father and sister, who were with us on their way to Aniwa, were warmly welcomed, and also the other Missionaries.

The teachers were well, and all the news was cheering. Everywhere were signs of special preparations, which touched me deeply. How different these smiles of welcome from the suspicious scowls of three short years ago! I realized, as I had never done before, how great a change the Gospel had already worked at Lenakel. And I thanked God and took courage.

From Norfolk Island I had brought two splendid horses for the work on Tanna. It was no little anxiety getting them ashore, but the skill of the officer in charge overcame all difficulties, and the natives yelled with delight as they saw them safely landed.

Early next morning, Sabbath, 12th February 1899, the people began to arrive for public Worship, and when the bell rang the Church was crammed to the door. It was to me a moving

sight, and I could hardly trust myself to lead the singing. My father, Mr Boyd, Mr McKenzie and I took part in the services. It was a great day for our people and for me.

Just as we sat down to tea, the steamer's whistle sounded, and on looking out we saw that a storm was brewing in the west. In a few minutes we were in the *Pioneer*, and five strong men were bending to the oars. We reached the ship just in time, and it was with difficulty that we got our beloved friends on board, owing to the quickly rising sea. Then, after a farewell cheer from boat and steamer, we pulled with all our might to get in before the storm burst. We got in not a moment too soon, and the vessel steamed slowly south.

The next morning I opened the boxes, and was delighted to find a good supply of clothing. There were 140 natives waiting to be paid for work they had done, and about 100 others were eager to begin. It takes an enormous amount of clothing to supply a people just emerging out of Heathenism, and it cannot be done without the self-denying efforts of friends abroad.

Towards evening I had my first ride on Tanna. The natives rushed into the bush with frantic yells, the moment the horse's head was turned in their direction, and I could hear them crashing through the reeds as I passed. Others followed

with shouts of delight, but a long way behind, and ready to take to the bush at a moment's notice. When I rode into the village, the people ran up the trees like monkeys, or scrambled on to the roofs of their houses. Others, again, trusted rather to the speed of their legs, and the result fully justified their confidence.

The next day, I rode up about three miles into the hills to see some sick people. Rangi, Tausi's stepson, came with me to cut away any obstructions from the path. Between Rangi's desire to clear the road for me and his fear of the horse, there was a constant struggle. Sometimes he would hack wildly at some overhanging branch, and then fly for his life, calling out—

“Misi, look out for that branch, I am weak to cut it, for fear the horse tramps on me.”

Once the horse snorted, and with a howl of terror Rangi took to his heels, expecting each moment to be his last! The horses proved to be a priceless boon to us in our work, and I only regretted that we had not got them long before.

While we were in Victoria, a report got about among the Heathen that Jesus was coming on a certain day to take the Worshippers to heaven, and burn up Tanna and all the Heathen. Some of the Heathen gathered their pigs together, and sat up all night watching; others began to kill and eat them, lest they should be destroyed by



TAPANNA AND MENE



TITONGA AND LITSI, AND THEIR CHILD SOMO

the fire. Others, again, turned fiercely upon the Worshippers as the cause of all the trouble. In the midst of this excitement, a labour-vessel came. The Heathen told the recruiter of the report that Tanna was to be burned, and asked him if it was true. The recruiter, being a long-headed man replied—

“ I don't know about Tanna, but I know that Queensland is not going to be burned,” and hinted that it would be as well to make sure by recruiting for Queensland !

We found that, in our absence, labour-vessels had obtained over ninety recruits at Lenakel, many of them lads that we had saved from Heathenism.

Shortly after my return we had our first marriage in the Church. The bridegroom was Iamahu, a veteran Loinio orator, about sixty years of age, and the bride was Katagha, who had likewise seen length of days. Old Iamahu was nervous, but resolute. One eye had been completely bunged up a few days before, but there was a fierce light of “ do or die ” in the other. Titonga acted as best man, and Litsi supported the bride. When I asked them to stand up, Iamahu strode right up to the pulpit, and glared at me with his one eye as much as to say, “ Now, Misi, do your worst ! ” But it required all the persuasive powers of Litsi, Titonga, and myself to coax the bride on

to her feet beside the bridegroom. At last she got up, screwing her face into frightful contortions. She grabbed the tip of Iamahu's fingers, and then made a dash for her seat, but Titonga had anticipated her movement, and caught her in his arms and brought her back. She now resigned herself to the inevitable, and answered the questions with her face turned away from the bridegroom, and finally beamed upon us all round. It was no easy matter to control my risibles, and I was thankful that Mrs Paton and Mr Hume were not present! They were a most loving and devoted couple, and were quite proud of having been the first to get married in the Church.

A never-ending delight to the natives was our magic-lantern. We were so thankful to get a box of beautiful Scripture slides from London. The picture that always made the deepest impression upon the natives was that of the Crucifixion. Even determined Heathen came to see the wonderful pictures, which could only be seen in the dark!

We had now to pass through a sad experience at Lenakel. Numakai, our noble, self-denying teacher at Loanesi, was taken from us. He took ill on the Sabbath, and on the Tuesday morning he died. The blow came to us with a terrible suddenness. I was with him all the Monday forenoon, and did what I could to relieve his fever. About one o'clock he was easier, and I returned

to Lenakel, leaving Litsi and Titonga in charge, with instructions to send for me at once if he got worse. At 3.30 on Tuesday morning Tausi roused me with the news that Numakai was worse. I hurried off and reached Loaneai at 5 o'clock. Numakai was then unconscious, and breathing heavily, and at 6 o'clock, while Titonga and I were praying beside him, he passed away peacefully. His wife and his mother were broken-hearted, and my own heart was like to break. We had played together as boys, and we had worked together as men. He was one of our ablest teachers, and his labours were greatly blessed of God. It was hard to believe that he was really gone.

Titonga hastened away to carry the sad news to Lenakel, and I sat beside the body of my comrade till he returned. As the news spread among the surrounding villages, one after another the dark figures stole softly in and sat down. The women cried, but the men sat in silent sorrow, some of them with their heads between their knees, and the tears falling fast. At last Titonga came back, and with him were all our Lenakel people. Tausi gave me one look, and then sat down and sobbed as if his heart would break—and he did not sob alone, for the four of us were comrades in the old Aniwān days, and now one of us was gone.

At 11 o'clock we gathered in the Church, and earnest, solemn words were spoken to the people of Loaneai, and many prayers ascended to the Throne of Grace. At 2 o'clock we buried him beside the Church which he had built with his own hands. Many stood around who had been led out of Heathenism by Numakai. We sang "There is a Happy Land," and then I read the last chapter of Mark, and prayed. After the grave was filled in, we all went down to the beach and brought up lovely white coral to mark a hero's grave.

Numakai left an influence at Loaneai that will never die. In earlier years he had a quick temper, but towards the end he had it in complete control, and his life was beautiful with Christlikeness. When he saw his wife crying during his illness, he said to her—

"Weep not, I am going to be with Jesus. Be strong to worship Him and to do His Will, and we will all meet there."

It was well with Numakai, and we could only pray that God would send us a like-hearted man of faith to carry on the work which he was called upon to lay aside.

Our little Church on West Tanna now passed through a time of sore trial. One after another was brought low in sickness till there were few of us left to tend the sufferers; and the death-wail

became terribly familiar to our ears. Some of our candidates were called home, and many of the less decided Worshippers also passed away. We leave them, and their glimmering faith, to Him who saw so much where men often saw so little. At last we began to look into one another's faces with the silent question, "Who will be the next?"

Seimata, Tausi's gentle wife, had a long illness. We did all we could for her, but the disease baffled us. It was hard to see the face growing daily thinner and more drawn with pain. If only Mrs Paton were here, we thought, how much she could do to relieve her distress! How I longed, too, for more medical knowledge. But we knew that she was in God's hands, and we prayed much for guidance.

"I love the people of Tanna," she said to me one day, "but only this sickness makes me so weak."

Near the end she took a great longing to see her native Aniwa once more, and I promised that if the steamer came here first on her way from the North I would send Tausi across with her. But when we heard the steamer's whistle it came from the South. That meant that it had gone to Aniwa first, and Seimata turned her face to the wall and said—

"It is finished with Aniwa now, I shall never see it again."

She lingered on a few days longer, and then on the 13th of May she passed away. Tausi looked long and wistfully at the worn face, and then up at me as he said—

“Misi, she is at rest now.”

Poor Tausi, how my heart bled for him! The news soon spread, and very deep was the sorrow of the people, for they loved the happy-hearted woman who had given up all for them. Tausi helped me to make her coffin, and as the sun was setting we buried her in our little Church-yard. A palm tree marks the place, and it is one of the sacred spots of Tanna. We prayed that God would send us more workers, as bright and faithful as our beloved Seimata.

A few days before Seimata died, I was giving out medicine on the back verandah, when I saw Iakar coming into the station carrying his only child. Lowi, his wife, and a few others followed. They were strangely quiet, and Tausi said to me—

“Misi, I think the child is dead.”

I hurried over to Iakar, and found that it was even so. Their only child was dead.

Poor Lowi and Iakar! They had just returned from Tongoa a few weeks before, and Iakar had settled among his own people at Lonialapin to be their teacher. And now in the very beginning of their work this sorrow had come upon them.

Lomai, too, was sorely tried at this time. First his baby girl sickened and died, and then his first-born son, little Iolu, who was the joy and delight of all Lenakel, became very ill. Lomai at once brought him to me, and for two days and a night we battled with death. But nothing could reduce the terrible fever. "Awe, my son, would that I could die for thee!" was the cry that was again and again wrung from Lomai's heart. And at last he added in a great agony of soul, "What Thou willest, O God." We did all that we could for our little Iolu, but on the second evening, just after Titonga and I had offered prayer, he passed away. Lomai was lying on his face on the floor, one hand clasping his child's and the other tightly clenched by his side.

"He is with Jesus now, Lomai," I said very gently. For a while nothing but the convulsive working of his muscles showed that he heard me, and then he said, "It is true, Misi." At last he lifted up his head and as he looked upon the face of his only child, so calm and still in death, a passion of sobbing shook his whole frame. How my heart did bleed for our noble-hearted Lomai and his brave wife!

Early next morning, through pouring rain he carried his child up to his village to bury him there. Titonga went with him and I was to

follow at midday to conduct the funeral. But just as I was getting ready, Titonga came in to say that it was all over. Lomai had hurried on the burial, and got Titonga to act for me that I might not have to go so far in the heavy rain. It touched me deeply to think that, even in his great sorrow, Lomai was more thoughtful of his Missionary than of himself. Surely this was the same mind which was in Christ.

Our hearts were saddened by many other deaths, and the faith of our people was sorely tried. But despite the wild "netik" talk of the Heathen, the Worshippers stood firm. Indeed the general sickness only drew them nearer to God. My own health was bad at this time, and I can never forget the tender faithfulness of our beloved teachers Tausi and Titonga who nursed me in sickness and lovingly ministered to all my wants. One or other would constantly come in, and sit down and look at me with earnest, loving eyes. "Misi, are you feeling a little better now?" or, "Misi, can I cook you something to eat?" God reward them for their faithful ministering, for I never can!

CHAPTER XVII

ANIWA ONCE MORE

DURING a lull in the general sickness, I decided to visit Aniwa, where my father and sister were now living. We launched the *Pioneer* at 2.30 one morning, and with Lomai and some of our leaders as crew, we set out for Aniwa. At daylight we reached Loanatit. A large number of people met us at the boat landing, and we had a very hearty service together. We then pushed on, hoping to reach Aniwa before dark, but a strong head wind baffled us, and we put into Loanbakel. Mr Forlong kindly invited us to stay the night with him, so we moored our boat in a lovely creek, and then climbed up to Mr Forlong's picturesque home. We sent messengers to the villages to gather the people for a service in the evening, and Mr Forlong and I ascended the hill that I might take accurate bearings of Aniwa on my boat compass. Meanwhile our crew stowed themselves away in all sorts of nooks and crannies, and slept soundly. At night I gave a magic lantern entertainment to the great delight of the natives.

That night I had just fallen into a deep sleep, when I was awakened by a terrible thud and found myself sitting on the floor. How I got there or in what part of the world I was, I had not the faintest idea! I was trying in vain to think the matter out, when an anxious voice asked—

“Are you much hurt?”

It was Mr Forlong’s voice, and that brought me back with a mental thud to Loanbaket.

“What’s up?” I asked in a startled bewilderment.

“Your hammock gave way!” was the answer which made all things clear. Then I slowly got up, rubbed myself on the sore place, stretched out my hammock once more, and was soon fast asleep.

At 2 A.M. I roused the crew, and by 3.30 we were feeling our way out of the creek and pulling seawards. It was very dark but I took the bearings of a star and steered by it. It was the Morning Star, and it took me back to the old student days in Germany. When my fellow-student, George Macfadyen, was lying on a weary bed of sickness, he used to watch so longingly for the Morning Star:

“It is like the great eye of God,” he said, “looking down upon me in my illness, and telling me that I am not forgotten.”

As we got out from the shelter of the point we found that we had a head wind and a lumpy

sea to contend with. The great waves broke around us, and it sounded eerie in the darkness. Our crew were getting just a little anxious, so I reminded them of Jesus watching and praying on the mountain top, while His disciples were struggling against wind and sea away down in the lake below. This cheered them greatly and they pulled on with fresh courage, till at last we came into less troubled seas.

When morning broke, we were still far from Aniwa, and the wind began to freshen. We now decided to try beating, and our new set of sails were soon hoisted. The *Pioneer* did nobly, and every board brought us nearer to Aniwa. At last we could see the fringe of white breakers around the reef. Lomai looked wistfully towards the land, and then said, "The old man will be standing upon these rocks all the time, and his heart will be saying, 'My son is in that boat away out there.' And then he will be praying hard to Jesus to help us and bring us safe to land."

And that was just what my father was doing all the long forenoon, as he watched us plunging and beating away out at sea.

In the boat with us was a little Aniwan lad, a son of the late Kamasiteia, who had come over to Tanna to help Numakai with the junior classes.

"Who is that, Tavo?" I said, pointing to a woman far out on the rocks. Tavo's eyes grew

tender, and his face lit up with a beautiful smile of love, but he could not speak. It was his mother, whom the little fellow had not seen for a year, and I loved him for the love he showed. One sees too seldom the love-light in a native's eye.

As we neared the landing we could distinguish one white head among all the black ones, and I knew it was my father's. Beside him stood my sister, and around them were gathered the faithful Aniwans, overjoyed to have their spiritual father once more in their midst. A few more strokes and fifty eager hands grasped the boat, while I jumped out upon the rocks. What a welcome we got! And how deeply our hearts were stirred.

But there was one dark shadow, and most of us shook hands with silence and with many tears. It was Numakai's death. Not since Kamasiteia died had there been such deep and general sorrow on Aniwa. And when we gathered in the Church an hour later, and I tried to tell them in broken words the story of Numakai's life and death, the whole congregation was bathed in silent tears. It was the sorrow of a whole people for one whom they loved with no common love, and he was worthy of their love.

The next few days were very happy ones to me, but they passed all too quickly. We managed to get a good deal of work done, including the election of a new elder. The man chosen



DR. J. G. PATON AND CHILDREN ON ANIWA

was Nalausi, another of my boyhood's comrades. It was no little joy to assist my father in all these services, and especially in the Communion Service to which they all led up.

One of the most hopeful features of the work on Aniwa was the large number of bright, intelligent children. And they were so eager to learn. My sister was kept more than busy with her many classes for writing, singing, reading, English, sewing, etc. The Aniwans were delighted to get the whole New Testament in their own language, which my father brought down with him. And it was a never to be forgotten sight to see my father's overflowing joy, as he went from village to village, followed by a crowd of happy children. It was a week to me of great happiness; and I would fain have stayed longer, but Tanna and its needs were tugging at my heart strings.

On the Sabbath afternoon, Lomai and Titonga addressed the people of Aniwa. Lomai said—

“Our joy is great to-day, as we meet in God's house and around the Holy Feast of Jesus. It is very good that we meet like this and praise our Father in heaven. There is for us only one heaven, the heaven that Jesus leads to. There is no other road for us but the road which Jesus made. We may think of earthly things, but they will not lead us to heaven. Only Jesus can take away our sins and lead us to heaven.

“Long ago Dr Paton, the aged, was a young man, and lived in Scotland. The Light came into his heart, and he said within himself, ‘I must not hide this Light, I must let it shine.’ And so he left his own land and brought the Light of Jesus to Aniwa. Aniwa was then a dark land, but now it is full of light. Men and women of Aniwa, do not hide your Light, let it shine! There is a dark land across the sea. Take the Light of Jesus there, and let it shine till that land is full of Light like your own. This is what Jesus told us to do, Let our Light shine.”

Titonga then rose and said—

“I see many things among us that are not right. There is often bad talk. When you hear a whisper of scandal you bend forward your ear and exclaim, ‘Say that again, say it again that I may hear it well.’ And then you take it and put it in your heart, and go about looking for someone to tell it to.

“You come to Church and take the Word of Jesus and open it and read it. Then you shut it and leave it there. You go to school in the morning and open the Word of Jesus and read it. Then you shut it and leave it there. You go to your work and forget it. You do not lay it up in your hearts. My friends, this is not right. We must close our hearts and ears to bad talk, and open our hearts and ears to the Word of Jesus.”

It was hard to go, but on Tuesday morning we set sail for Tanna with a fair wind. At 3 P.M. we landed at Nalebot, and preached the Gospel to some people whom we saw on the beach. Towards sundown we arrived at Loanatit. Yalemiau and ninety of his people met us at the landing, and the report of the work was most cheering. We rigged up our tent and made things comfortable for the night, and then had some tea. As soon as it was dark enough, we climbed the cliff to the Church, and I showed them pictures through the magic lantern. The pictures of Jesus as a Baby and Jesus on the Cross were the two that impressed them most. The people were eager for books, and as soon as it became known that I had hymn-books with me, a rush was made for the tent, and they were all sold out in a few seconds. Yalemiau's labours were being abundantly blessed.

Early next morning we once more set out, and a long day's pulling brought us safely to Lenakel, to the great joy of our people. All was well and the work prosperous.

Soon after our return, we went on a three days' walking tour among the Iounmene and our friends to the North. At one village we found the people on the point of war, but we brought the hostile parties together, and after some heated explanations peace was restored. At the same village

was a man who had been baptized in Queensland, but who on his return gradually went back into Heathenism. I was astonished to find him a kava drinker, and when I spoke to him about it he produced his English New Testament and said—

“You show me book and number where kava he stop. Me no look kava here; me think he all right.”

I tried to reason the thing out with him, but he was obstinate. I was afraid his influence might be hurtful to the others, but the general verdict was, “I think kava he make head belong him no good.” So that his conduct was regarded as a strong argument against kava.

At another village, Iemagia, high priest of Maslo, tried to interrupt our service. He roared at the people for listening, and all the women bolted except one old dame, who braved his anger. The men, however, took no notice of him. He then got his gun and ordered us to stop. I was engaged in prayer at the time, and at the close I made some pointed remarks to Iemagia, which sent him roaring into the bush.

It was now getting near steamer-time, and the natives made great preparations to welcome Mrs Paton. The steamer cry startled us one morning at school. Down went the copy books, and half the school had reached the door when Numanian arose and called out—

“What do you mean by running out before Misi has closed with prayer?”

So I called them back and asked Numanian to pray. Then we all made a rush—Titonga to run up the flag, Tausi to kill a couple of fowls, and Lomai to launch the *Pioneer*. All the natives were in a state of the wildest excitement, and perhaps the most excited of all was their Missionary, who was looking forward to seeing his wife and child.

But alas! we were doomed to disappointment. For when we got alongside we found that Mrs Paton was not on board. Our little one had been at death's door, and the doctor had forbidden them to come. But my heart rose to God in thankfulness for His sparing mercies, and for all the loving-kindness with which my wife had been surrounded in her time of sore anxiety.

Mr Hume also was not on board, having got off at Kwamera to be with our fellow-workers there at a time of great danger and unrest. Keen was the disappointment among the women, when we returned from the ship without Mrs Paton.

One Wednesday morning about this time, Titonga, Lomai, Numanian and I set out at daylight to visit our southern tribes. We found that sickness had made terrible ravages amongst them. One village was in daily dread of an attack from the Iasurmene, a tribe in Mr Gillies' district, and

they asked us to go and mediate between them. The Iasurmene were one of the fiercest tribes on Tanna. They were deadly haters of the Worship, and were constantly threatening to shoot Mr Gillies. One night they had even gone to the house and looked in at the window in the night to carry out their threat, but the dogs rushed at them and they bolted. It was the same tribe who had lain hid among the rocks on Point Laiuk to shoot us as we passed in the boat, when the squall baulked them.

Lomai and the other two were eager to go and see them. He said, "Misi, they are like other men; and if we go and look into their faces, they will be friendly and let us talk to them."

So we decided to go and see them.

We had not gone far into their territory when we saw a small band of them. They began to run away, but we called them back; they stood irresolutely for a few seconds, and then sat down on a rock to await us. We had a long talk with them, and they promised to gather the whole tribe next morning for a conference. We then pushed on towards Kwamera to spend the night there. In a couple of hours, we met a larger band of them returning from a day's man-hunting. They also promised to meet us next morning, and we continued our weary walk, climbing hills, walking over long stretches of loose boulders, wading round

precipitous points, and finally losing our way among dense reeds as the sun went down. Titonga hunted out a comfortable place for us to camp in, but Lomai climbed a tree and looked about him. Then he said, "Let me go first," and with a wonderful instinct he hacked away right through the tangled reeds and creepers, and soon brought us out on to the beach. The moon was now up, and its light enabled us to follow the track along the shore. Here a new danger presented itself; for we were coming from the enemy's country, and should any of the Kwamera natives see us approaching, they would undoubtedly fire upon us. However, we gave three British cheers to show that we were friends, and then crossed the stream that flows past the Mission station. We found Mr and Mrs Gillies and the baby well, though they had been suffering from fever. Mr Hume, too, was looking much better. We sat up far into the night talking, and enjoyed the happy fellowship.

Early next morning we started on our homeward journey, Mr Gillies and Mr Hume accompanying us for a mile or two. At Laiuk the Iasurmene met us, and we had a long talk with them on the very rocks from which they had planned to shoot us. They listened attentively, and at the close of our talk we held a service. Lomai began his address by saying, "Long ago

my grandfather stood upon these stones to talk to you about the old fashion, and now upon these same rocks I stand up to tell you about a new and better fashion." And he told them the story of Jesus and His love. Titonga and Numanian also spoke fearlessly and earnestly. After the service they came with us to the point. We prayed that God's Spirit would work in the hearts of this treacherous and bloodthirsty tribe.

The sun had gone down, and the short twilight was deepening into darkness as we rounded the last point on our homeward journey. A mighty yell from Tausi showed that he was on the watch, and we got a specially warm welcome from our people, as they feared that we had been killed by the Iasurmene.

CHAPTER XVIII

REINFORCEMENTS

ONE day a labour vessel landed two recruits. Lomai and Iavis met them and persuaded them to remain with the Christian party. A few days after Mrs Paton returned, one of them came to her and asked her to mend his trousers, as one leg was cut off. She asked how it had happened, and he said that as they drew near Tanna he made up his mind to go back into Heathenism, and cut up his trousers. Then Lomai and Iavis talked him over, and he had now decided to remain with the Worshippers. He was a son of old Iamahu, the Loinio orator. The other man was Iehlap, Numanipen's husband. He remained with us for a while, as his wife was one of our Church members. Then he went back to his own village on the other side of Tanna, and of course Numanipen went with him. All his people were Heathen, and they tried hard to get Iehlap to join in their evil practices. Numanipen fought a lonely battle with the whole tribe, and sent pathetic messages to us to come over and help her.

One day Lomai, Tausi, Sisi and I set out for Weasisi, and spent a couple of days with Mr Macmillan, returning by Numanipen's village. As soon as she heard our voices she came running forward with both hands outstretched, and then she burst into tears. My heart was deeply stirred to see her joy at seeing us. She cried bitterly as she told us how the men sought to draw her husband away, and how he sometimes yielded. She had been longing for some of us to come over and help her. She had an almanac, and on this she marked each day with a piece of burned stick lest she should miss the Sabbaths! We had a long talk and earnest prayer, which greatly cheered her. She was battling against fearful odds, but God was on her side, and she clung to Him with a tenacious faith. And God answered her prayer and ours, for in the end she won her husband back to Christ, and he is now an assistant teacher at Lenakel. But she had to sow in many tears before she reaped her harvest of joy.

The sun set before we were half way across Tanna on our way back. It is no joke to be overtaken by darkness in the heart of Tanna, but fortunately Tausi had bought some wax matches at Weasisi. We each took a box, and lighted ourselves over the rough places by match-light. As we were descending a mountain pass, we were suddenly brought up by a band of armed and

painted savages. Holding a match close up to the face of the leader, I recognised him, and asked what their errand was. He said they were going to get water at the spring. I knew that this was a lie, so I pressed him further, and at last he said that they were going to a Heathen dance. I was still doubtful, but had to be content with this, and we hurried on. I asked Lomai if he thought they spoke the truth, or if he thought they were on their road to some deed of darkness. Lomai was quite satisfied that it was feasting and not bloodshed that they were going to, because he noticed that the leaves in their armlets were festal leaves, and not leaves of war. An hour or two later we got safely back to Lenakel.

Our next incident was a visit from H.M.S *Wallaroo*. Mr Watt came ashore, with a request from the captain that I should go on board and see him in connection with the Iasurmene trouble. I did so, and we had a long conference. It was arranged that we should go on board before daylight next morning with native guides, and that from Kwamera we should walk to the Iasurmene and have a friendly talk with them. I at once agreed to this, though I was weak with fever and had a painful boil on my leg. Next morning we boarded the man of war with Tausi, Lomai and Iavis as guides. At 8.30 we arrived at Kwamera,

and Mr and Mrs Gillies and Mr Hume welcomed us on the beach. We at once set out for the Iasurmene. The expedition was made up of Captain Farquhar, Lieutenant Thompson, Mr Watt, Mr Gillies, Tausi, Lomai, Iavis and myself. It was a long rough walk, and about half way Mr Watt became exhausted and had to turn back. I sent Tausi with him. We were rewarded for our pains by surprising the natives before they could run away. Only one man was missing, but as he was the Chief, Mr Gillies and I started to hunt for him. After about an hour's search, with natives yelling in all directions, we came upon him hiding in some long grass in a corner of his plantation. When he found that there was no escape he said—

“Me no run away, me no fright, me sick!”

But all the time he could hardly speak for terror, and kept looking this way and that for some chance of bolting. Mr Gillies and I placed him between us, and marched him in triumph into the village. The captain now addressed the Iasurmene, and Mr Gillies and Lomai interpreted. I shall never forget the Chief's face. He firmly believed that his last hour had come, and he looked appealingly from Mr Gillies to the captain for mercy. He tried to smoke to show that he was quite at ease, but the attempt was a melancholy failure, as he applied the burning

stick to his pipe and forgot to take it away again ! Thus he stood throughout the whole interview. He promised to behave in future, and then the captain and he planted a tree together as a symbol of peace. This and the shaking of hands ended the conference to the intense relief of the Chief, whose evil conscience kept him in abject terror throughout.

The homeward journey was a somewhat painful experience. Mr Gillies became ill with fever, so we sent Lomai on with the captain and lieutenant, as they were anxious to reach their ship before dark. Iavis and I followed with Mr Gillies. As darkness set in, we lost our way and came to a stream. The safest way was to wade down the stream, as we knew that it flowed past the Mission house. The bed of the stream was full of huge boulders, and here and there were deep pools. At first, we had a long stick with which we sounded the depth of the next pool before sliding down the boulder into it, but at one place the current carried away the stick, and we could not find it in the dark. The banks were impassable for wild undergrowth, so we had to make the best of it, the water often reaching up to our waists. Poor Iavis felt it terribly cold, and between Mr Gillies' fever, and my boil, we had a bad time. But at last we came to the mouth of the stream, and the cheerful lights in

the Mission house greeted our tired eyes. Rest was sweet after the day of toil.

Early next morning, Mr Watt and our Lenakel party and I, set out for Port Resolution by boat. A squall struck us as we got out of the passage, but Mr Watt's splendid seamanship saved us from being capsized. We landed on the Kwamera side of the port, and had an hour and a half's walking. We found Mr and Mrs Paterson well, and had a happy evening together. We were to start by boat early next morning for Loelikas, and walk from there across Tanna to Lenakel, but I was very ill with fever all that night, and our start had to be delayed for a day.

Next day, however, I faced the journey, and though I was still very weak, and my boil gave me great pain, we got safely across. A great welcome awaited us at Lenakel. Old Iamahu shook hands with me three times and said—

“Misi, don't go so far away again. I have been crying and praying for you all the time.”

The Iasurmene kept their compact for a long time, and then “netik” troubles broke out amongst themselves. Kaiahune, the Chief, turned traitor and massacred half his village. Those who escaped got help from another tribe and in return massacred Kaiahune and most of his party. The remainder recruited in the next labour vessel, and

thus another powerful tribe was practically wiped out of Tanna.

It was now nearing Synod, and as I had a great deal of station work on hand, Tausi and Lomai visited the northern out-stations for me. They were away three days, and brought back a most cheering report.

Titonga went to Weasisi, to see if he could get any news of the steamer, and on Sabbath evening he returned with the news that she had arrived there, and that she would arrive next morning with little Frankie and Mrs Heyer on board. I was away among the hills preaching when he arrived, but in the evening I saw him sitting under a cedar tree as I returned. Litsi and some others were standing near, and I was so excited to get the news that I walked up to Litsi and shook hands warmly and asked her if she was very tired. A roar of laughter from the others made me realise that in my excitement I had mistaken Litsi for Titonga! It was good news not only for me, but for the whole work, for every department of it suffered for lack of Mrs Paton's presence and counsel.

About 7.30 next morning the steamer arrived. We pulled out at once in the *Pioneer*, and we had a happy re-union on board. It was no little joy to see my wife and bairn again. Mrs Heyer had come all the way from Melbourne to enable

me to remain at my post off Tanna. Mr Hume, my father and sister were also on board, and many others who were on their way to Synod. It was a great disappointment to us that we could not go on with them to the annual gathering, but our duty lay at home. In a few minutes the anchor was up, and the *Victoria* steamed away north, while we pulled for the shore.

As we neared the landing the people crowded down to the water's edge, and Tausi led them in a ringing British cheer. Then the women's voices sounded out one continuous chorus of welcome, until the boat touched the sand. With a joyous rush they surrounded us, and a hundred eager hands were pressing forward to grasp Mrs Paton's. We were soon ashore, but it was a long time before we reached the gate, only a few yards away. The welcome touched us deeply. Little Frankie was not a bit afraid of the natives, but smiled all around to their intense delight. All day the people came to welcome Mrs Paton, and to see the little fair-haired, blue-eyed stranger, whom they took to their hearts at once. Deep and genuine also was the welcome which was extended on all hands to Mr Hume. It was a great day for the natives, but greatest of all for their Missionary.

But this was not all. The steamer brought us four new teachers and their wives from Aniwa.

We went straight into Church and held a great thanksgiving service. We were now able to fill up Numakai's place, and had still three teachers for new out-stations. Truly we had great cause for thanksgiving on that historic day.

The first to be settled out were Tapanua and his wife Mene, named after my sister Minnie. They took up Numakai's work at Loaneai. Mrs Paton and I rode over with them one Saturday afternoon, and great was the excitement of the people at seeing a woman on horseback. They were overjoyed to get another teacher, and we had an impressive consecration service. The next day we again went to Loaneai, with a great company of worshippers from Lenakel. The settlement was a very happy one. Tapanua belonged to the younger generation of Aniwans, but he proved a worthy successor to Numakai. He was a man of great sagacity, and his letters to me about the work were always a model for clearness and brevity. He saved me many a tramp by sending me statements of difficulties, so clear and comprehensive, that I could at once write him full advice. He was cool-headed and fearless, and God abundantly blessed his labours from the very beginning.

We were anxious to settle one of the other teachers at Eneta. One day Lomai found the Chief and his people on the beach, so he brought

them up to the Mission house for a conference. For hours Lomai and Iavis pled with them to take a teacher, and accept the Worship. Most of them seemed willing enough, but the Chief was afraid of "netik," and obstinately opposed the proposal. In the end he carried his people with him, and they decided against a teacher. However, in time there will be a good opening there.

Sabbath, the 2nd of July, was one of our great days at Lenakel. Early in the morning the people began to troop into the Mission station. It was our Communion Sabbath, and our Church was filled to the door. Mr Hume and I both addressed the people, and I had the inexpressible joy of baptizing twenty-five men and women whom God had drawn to Himself out of Heathenism. Thirty-seven Tannese sat down with us at the Lord's Table, and it was a time of holy joy. How it made us long for the time when all the Tannese would share in that blessed Feast!

At the close of the service, we took our first collection, and it amounted to £5, 7s. Since then we have taken up a regular monthly collection in aid of the printing fund. It was one more step in the gradual development of our West Tanna Church.

CHAPTER XIX

BEGINNINGS OF A NATIVE MINISTRY

IN June 1899, I made an earnest appeal to the people for men and women who would consecrate their lives to the work of teaching. They were to leave their homes and come to Lenakel to be trained for three years. They were then to go, where God led the way, to settle as teachers. I dwelt especially on the fact that they must give up all and follow Christ anywhere. The response was such as to fill our hearts with joy and thanksgiving. Nine of our best men willingly consecrated themselves to this work. Five of them were our tried leaders: Lomai, Iavis, Numanian, Nelbini and Tom; men who had proved themselves to be full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; men who had already endured much and done much for the spread of Christ's Kingdom among their fellows. They were giants and heroes, all of them. The four others were younger men, who were fast becoming leaders of real power. They were Nilua, Neropo, Kahwa and Iau Selok.

These men left their homes and friends to follow Christ. We marked out a new village on

the Mission station, the houses forming three sides of a square, with a huge banyan tree in the centre. Each house contained two rooms, a living-room and a sleeping-room. The volunteers built their own houses, and in a few months the village was finished. They called it Lomanipo, and it became the model village for all West Tanna. It was a lovely, shady spot, and they were delighted with their new quarters.

We appointed these men assistant teachers, and also deacons or managers in the Church. The Bible was our text book, and the study of it our main business, together with the preaching of it and the living of it. The women were under Mrs Paton's special control, and had to learn all kinds of women's work. In the forenoons we had classes, and in the afternoons the assistant teachers did manual labour on the Mission station, while in the evening they always conducted open-air services among themselves. We spent every Thursday evangelizing, and on Sabbath afternoons we visited the surrounding villages. Saturday was generally devoted to plantation work, but often I sent the assistant teachers home from Saturday to Monday, that they might hold special services among their own people.

But the following programme will give a better idea than anything else of our regular school day's work :—



MR FRANK PATON AND THE FIRST CONVERTS
Names from left to right—

Bottom Row—Semata, Teinian, Jesau, Numanipen, Litsi.

Middle Row—Tausi, Mr Paton, Mr Hume, Tionga.

Third Row—Numanian, Lohman, Lomai, Naupuni, Jela, Tom.

Back Row—Javis (hidden by little John), Nibini.

At 6 A.M. the large conch-shell was blown, and the natives trooped down to the beach to wash their faces. At 6.30 the shell again sounded to call them to breakfast. At 7 the bell rang for school. This was the general school, and was attended by old and young from all the villages for miles around. Reading, singing, a Bible lesson, and writing were the main subjects. At 8.30 the general school was over, and the natives went off to their plantations. From 8.30 to 9.30 we attended to sick cases, gave out medicine, did bartering, and dealt with all sorts of requests from natives. At 9.30 the small conch-shell called the assistant teachers to their special classes. We had Old and New Testament lessons, English and writing, with all kinds of odd information and teaching thrown in. At 11.30 the large shell sounded the call to dinner, and the day's teaching was over. From 11.30 till 1 P.M. the teachers rested, and then the large shell again sounded as a call to manual work. This continued till 4, when the signal to cease work gladdened their hearts. Most of them then went down to the sea for a swim, and at 5 the bell rang for evening worship in the Church. At 5.30 the call to tea was blown, and then they had the evening to themselves, when they always gathered for prayer and conference under their village banyan tree. This was our regular order on teaching days, but, of

course, it was often broken into by special calls to other work.

This plan succeeded far beyond our hopes. These men became in a short time able teachers of the Word of God and wise rulers in His Church. Not one of them disappointed us, and God's blessing rested abundantly on all their labours. More and more we were led to feel that our main work was to translate the Word of God and train up men to teach and preach that Word to their fellows, and there is no training like setting them to win their own people for Christ. It was a great responsibility, but an ever-increasing joy, to teach these men and women, and to see them growing in grace and in power. A native ministry trained by and working under a European Missionary—we felt to be the only true and lasting way of doing Missionary work.

Another advance in our work was the taking into the house and training of Tanna girls. We found them not only willing but eager to come. Iesua was the first, and then Wahu. Wiau, a third girl, was told to come after the steamer arrived, as some of our Aniwans were then leaving us. No sooner was the steamer sighted than Wiau presented herself all smiles. Later on we took in a fourth, Nabupo. These girls were Mrs Paton's special care. They were eager to learn, and their influence soon told upon the other girls.

Little Frankie was very fond of his little black nurses, and they in turn would do anything for him. One day Iesua came running to me in great excitement, "Franke ramakar! Franke ramakar!" That is, Frankie is speaking! I found the little fellow saying, "Tata, tata!" which happens to be Tannese for "Father," whatever it may mean in baby language. This quite established Frankie's reputation as a genuine Tanna man, and proved to their entire satisfaction that his being born in the Colonies was a mere accident of birth!

We now turned our attention to the settlement of our remaining Aniwaniwi teachers. Mala and his wife volunteered for Lokavit. We used to shoot birds and catch fish together in the old Aniwaniwi days, and it was a peculiar joy to me to see these men rallying round us in the serious work of life. Early one morning we started for Lokavit. Some of us boated half way, while a large party walked along the beach. As we rounded the first point we saw the shore party far ahead of us, but as the wind freshened we overtook one band after another. Each band broke into a run as we came abreast of it, until at last a long straggling line of men, women, and children were running along the beach. Their many coloured dresses, the white sand, the lovely green background, and the morning sunshine flooding it all, made up a picture to be long remembered.

From the landing we had a climb of three miles to Lokavit. While most of us went to settle Mala, Tausi sailed on in the *Pioneer* to Loanatit to bring Yalemiau and his wife to Lenakel for medical treatment, and to leave Iakave and Nakata in their place. Iakave was one of the new teachers who had come over from Aniwa, and Nakata, his wife, was the girl who came over with Litsi in the beginning as nurse to little Somo.

At Lokavit the people received us with many signs of joy. They came out to meet us, and led us to a banyan tree under which they had prepared a great feast. They were overjoyed to have a teacher of their own at last, and we ourselves thanked God for this happy outcome of our many journeys among the Iounmene. Mala felt at home at once, and never was teacher better cared for. He proved a faithful and able man, though he was never a fluent speaker, and God gave him many souls for his hire.

About six weeks later we again visited Lokavit, this time to cut a horse track. Numanian did heroic service with the axe that day, as did the others. The natives yelled with excitement as I galloped into Lokavit. Mala was happy in his work and was being loaded with kindness by his people.

We now turned our thoughts to Towar Ribor (the great mountain) as a good site for an out-

station right in the heart of Tanna. It had long been one of our preaching stations, and we had promised to get them a teacher if we could. So one morning a large party of us set out for Lona-puas, the leading village of the Towar Ribor tribe. But we found it utterly deserted. The people had got wind of our coming, and being too polite to refuse a teacher, they had cleared out. We were surprised and somewhat disheartened by this sudden change of attitude to the Worship, but we sent out scouts to hunt for the people. Meanwhile we sat down under a shady tree to eat our lunch. Iamahu, who has a turn for humour, found some kava roots in the kava house, and in imitation of a heathen festival solemnly made three heaps, one for the Aniwans, one for Lomai and the Tannese, and one for me. He was laughing heartily at his own joke, when the owner of the kava suddenly walked into the village. Iamahu's face now became a picture of dismay, but fortunately the man sat down with his back to the heaps. Iamahu seized the opportunity to collect the kava and return it to its proper place, but he kept an eye on the owner the whole time in case he should turn round. Tausi was grinning broadly at Iamahu's feverish anxiety. Lomai's face was very solemn, but his shoulders were heaving as if with some internal earthquake. As for me, I laughed outright, but our Heathen friend

put it down to friendliness and good-will, quite unconscious of the play that was going on behind his back. When the last root was returned Iamahu heaved a great sigh of relief, and came and sat down with a most virtuous expression of innocence!

By this time two other leading Heathen arrived, and a long talk and much inward prayer resulted in their decision to sell a piece of ground for an out-station. They promised to build a house free of cost and I promised to settle Kawa, our fourth Aniwan, among them as soon as it was finished. Fever came on badly on the road back, and it was with difficulty that I got home. But we were all well pleased with the result of our day's work.

The steamer now came, and we had the sorrow of bidding farewell to Mrs Heyer and my father and sister, who were on their way to Melbourne.

A little later an epidemic of measles swept over the island. Almost the whole population were down with it, but fortunately few deaths resulted. Still it caused much bad talk and ill feeling among the Heathen, who of course blamed the "netik" makers, and they in turn blamed the Worship.

Nabuk, a man whom I visited frequently in his last illness, said to me one day—

"I had a vision last night. I was carried up to a beautiful village, a *beautiful* village, and there

was plenty of food, *plenty* of food, beautiful food. I am going to that place, I am longing to go to it."

Another day he said to me, "I seemed to be in heaven, and far away in a horrible place I saw the people of Lomanian. The fire burned them and they cried out for oranges. Lomanian is one of the most Heathen villages in the Loinio tribe. When Iavis heard of this vision he beamed with delight, and went straight off to Lomanian to warn the people of their coming doom if they did not give up their evil conduct. Even Lomanian, however, is becoming disheartened in its Heathenism, for in reply to an invitation to get up a Heathen dance they said, "We can't, for the Worship is all around us."

At another very Heathen village the Chief asked a youth to take a second wife, but he declined on the ground that the Worship was bound to come in the end, and he was not going to make it harder for him to accept it when it did come. Thus even where men refused to accept the Gospel, it was beginning to influence them in spite of themselves.

CHAPTER XX

NUMANIAN THE MARTYR

ON Friday 8th September 1899, alarming news reached us from Loanatit. It was reported that Iakave, our teacher, was murdered, and that Mr Forlong had been shot through the leg. We knew that a trader near Weasisi had been fired at by the natives and slightly wounded in the leg, and we hoped that the report from Loanatit was nothing more than a Heathen version of this incident. But as the report was full and circumstantial, we decided to go at once to Loanatit and investigate. With some difficulty I got Yalemiau mounted on horseback and we started off, intending to ride as far as the road was good, and then tie up our horses and walk the rest of the way. Yalemiau was much more afraid of the horse than of the Heathen, but he stuck to it bravely. About four miles from Lenakel, as we were cantering along the sand, we saw a party of clothed natives coming towards us. Suddenly Yalemiau gave a great shout of "Iakave!" And my heart rose to God for His goodness, for it was indeed Iakave on his way from Loanatit to Lena-

kel. The report was a heathen lie from beginning to end. All was well at Loanatit, but the bush people were constantly threatening them, and they wanted me to bring them all over to Lenakel that they might worship in peace. After a few hurried words, Yalemyau and I galloped back to Lenakel with the joyful news, leaving Iakave and his party to follow more slowly.

That night at midnight the steamer arrived, and we had the joy of welcoming ashore a large party of Missionaries, including my brother from Malekula. The time passed all too quickly, as our friends had to be on board again at 4 A.M.

The following Sabbath, I asked for volunteers to go with me to Loanatit on the Monday. Lomai, Numanian, Neropo, Titonga and others responded, and early next morning we set sail with a fair wind. The people turned out in force to welcome us, and we spent a happy afternoon and evening with them. We talked over all their troubles, and it was decided that we should go to Lonebotbot next day and have a talk with the bush people.

We set out accordingly with a good following, including Yalemyau and our Lenakel volunteers. Some of the Loanatit people came with us as guides. The walk was a very rough one as we had to climb a steep mountain, but in about two hours we reached Lonebotbot. It was a village

on the top of a conical hill, surrounded by mountains and gullies. The old Chief received us in a very friendly way, and we had a long talk with him. He said he wished his sons were there to hear the good word, but they were away with the rest of the tribe fighting. Besides the Chief I could only see one man and some women in the village. We were delighted with the old Chief, and he seemed greatly interested when we held a service with him.

I asked Numanian to close with prayer, and we had just finished when we were startled by the bang of a musket close beside us. The first hint I had of any danger was the sudden clearing of the village. Turning round I found myself face to face with two men with levelled guns. One of the Loanatit men remained beside me, and together we talked earnestly with the two men, and explained that our mission was one of peace and for their salvation. One of the men seemed to be touched by our appeal, and lowered his gun. But the other ran up to him and laying down his own gun which had been discharged, seized that of his more merciful friend, and came towards us. I was still talking to him, and he was only a few yards away, when I saw his finger tighten on the trigger. With one swift prayer I threw myself on Christ, and then I saw the flash and heard the bang as he fired at me.

But I felt no pain—he had missed me. I could hardly believe my own senses, and was still looking down at my side in a dazed sort of way when Lomai recalled me to myself. He had fallen over the embankment at the first shot, and now hurried up again to get me away dead or alive. “Come away quick, Misi!” he called out. I then saw the man who had fired pick up his own gun and run behind a tree with both guns, probably to reload them. Lomai called out again, “Come on, Misi, no good you stand there and get we all shot.” All our party had taken to the bush at the first shot and made straight for Loanatit, except Lomai and Tauero, who only waited to save me. Realizing that by remaining I endangered their lives as well as my own, I followed Lomai along the track with a heavy heart. “Quick, Misi, quick,” Lomai called out over his shoulder. “Suppose they get round the mountain first, we all get killed.”

We did not know then that the brave Numanian had been mortally wounded by the first shot. Both shots were fired at me, and as Numanian took to the bush with the rest we did not know that he was hurt. But when he did not turn up at Loanatit with the others, and various rumours reached us, we feared the worst, and the hours that followed were terrible with suspense and grief. Search parties went out, and one of these

brought him back. He had kept in the bush for hours to hide from the enemy, and did not show himself till well on towards Loanatit. It was then that he was found struggling manfully onward, with a bullet hole through his body. Had he only taken to the track sooner, Lomai and Tauero and I would have overtaken him, as we left the village a good while after he did.

Meanwhile I had got the boat launched, and all in readiness for a start to Lenakel. Some of the Loanatit people wanted to go and shoot the Lonebotbot people, but they came to me first to know what my word was. I said that my word was that no one was to be shot, and so they agreed to restrain themselves. After some talking the whole tribe decided to come in a body to Lenakel and live there, that they might be able to "learn the Worship in peace." Soon the news came that Numanian was being brought, and I ran up the hill with a light to meet him. I could hardly speak for grief, but Numanian said—

"Awe, Misi Paton, Jesus bore as great a pain as this for me ; it is good that I should suffer too."

We made a bed for him with the tent in the stern of the boat, and with a load of women and children on board we pulled for Lenakel. I gave Lomai the helm, and did all I could to ease Numanian. His wound, I saw at once, was hopeless, and

neither he nor we expected to reach Lenakel before he died. But we prayed hard and pulled hard. Most of us were utterly worn out with the day's terrible experiences, and we made but slow progress. Numanian exhorted the deacons and all the people to stand fast for Jesus, and he sent his last messages to his wife and children. He longed to see them once more, but he knew that Jesus would take care of them. Lomai then sang very softly that beautiful hymn which we had translated into Tannese :—

- “ There is a green hill far away,
Without a city wall,
Where the dear Lord was crucified,
Who died to save us all.
- “ We may not know, we cannot tell
What pains He had to bear,
But we believe it was for us
He hung and suffered there.
- “ He died that we might be forgiven ;
He died to make us good,
That we might go at last to heaven,
Saved by His precious blood.
- “ There was no other good enough
To pay the price of sin ;
He only could unlock the gate
Of heaven, and let us in.
- “ Oh, dearly, dearly has He loved ;
And we must love Him too,
And trust in His redeeming blood,
And try His works to do.”

And it soothed Numanian. But his heart was full of joy, and he never once complained. All night long we bent at the oars, and at last just as the first faint glow of dawn lit up the eastern sky, we reached Lenakel. We at once sent for Numanian's wife and children, and then we carried our beloved friend up to the Mission house and did all that loving hearts could do for his comfort and relief. Soon the whole worshipping people from every village round about were with us. The grief of our people was terrible. But Numanian was calm, and spoke his last words to them, and said good-bye. Our hearts were like to break for his wife and lovely children. "Good-bye, Lohman," he said, "be strong for Jesus, and teach our children Iata and Makia His word. I go before you to heaven, but I wait for you there. Give your hearts to Jesus and you will come to me there. My word to you is finished."

Then he said good-bye to us all, and waved his hand to the people gathered outside. He suffered great agony, but he was brave and calm. At a quarter past one he passed away, leaving us a name and an example that will move us to the end of our lives.

That evening we buried him in the Churchyard, a spot already made sacred as the last resting-place of Seimata. Mrs Paton made a cross of

white flowers, while the people gathered lovely white coral to mark his grave.

Next to Lomai, Numanian had become our most trusted leader, and the loss to us was a terrible one. But we believed that even so great a loss would be turned into gain for Tanna. We had travelled many rough roads together, and together we had slept in tents and huts. In all the work, he was our constant helper, and we never found him to fail. We trusted him as a worker, and we loved him as a friend. He died for his Lord and for his fellow-men, and an abiding joy in our hearts, as well as an abiding sorrow, will be the memory of Numanian the Martyr.

The day after Numanian died, we set out early for Loanatit to bring over the rest of the people. Mr Worthington very kindly lent us his boat, and Lomai took charge of it, while I sailed the *Pioneer*. The people were all ready, and we soon had the two boats filled with women and children. All who were strong enough walked along the shore. It was a somewhat anxious trip with our boats so full, but we reached Lenakel safely as the sun went down. The bush people evidently took us for an attacking party, for as soon as we appeared round the point in the morning they set fire to the grass all along the top of the mountains between Loanatit and

Lonebotbot. This was so as to leave no cover for an enemy to approach under. It was as well they made this mistake, as otherwise they would not likely have let us remove the Loanatit people without making an attack upon us.

While we were away, the Lenakel Worshippers met and decided that each of them would invite one or more families of the Loanatit people to come and live with them. They did this of their own accord, and it relieved us of much care, as it spread over many families the burden of feeding so large a number of people. Our friends were soon at home at Lenakel and Loaneai, and many of them joined the Candidates' class and became truly earnest Worshippers.

Mr Macmillan, on hearing 'the sad news, hurried over from Weasisi to see us, Mr Forlong came from North Tanna, and Mr Hume from Kwamera, where he was helping Mr Gillies in some building operations. We were deeply touched by the sympathy of our fellow-workers, and their visit did all our people good.

On the 1st of October, a letter reached me from Captain Farquhar, who was at Weasisi with his ship, requesting me to give him full information as to the sad affair at Lonebotbot. Lomai and I walked across to Weasisi, and gave him an account of what had taken place. We spent the night with the Macmillans, and returned to

Lenakel early next morning. We heard afterwards that the British and French men-of-war landed a joint party who went up and burned the village. The natives of course decamped, and when the men-of-war had gone rebuilt their village. However, the visit did good and showed the natives that the man of war had a long arm that could reach right into the heart of Tanna. It was a much needed lesson.

After this, the village authorities met and decided to shoot Iapum for firing at us. But one of them spoke up and said—

“Iapum is a young man, he could do nothing in his own name, he only did what you decided that he should do.” They acknowledged that this was true, and Iapum was allowed to live, though he thought it prudent to remove to another village.

One of the ringleaders of Heathenism in that tribe became ill soon after. His last request before he died was that they should bury him with his loaded gun in his hands, so that he could shoot the Devil when he came to take him to the “big fire.” As soon as he died, a man was shot on suspicion of causing his death by “netik,” and the tribe divided itself into two parties. In this war, Lonebotbot was a second time wrapped in flames. They were learning that Heathen compacts are not to be relied upon, and that the way

of transgressors is hard. We were saddened to think of all this fighting on the lovely hills of North Tanna.

At this time, I translated some new hymns to rouse the spirit of our people, such as, "The Son of God goes forth to war," and "Why rage the Heathen?" They learned them quickly, and these hymns had no small influence in stirring them up to fresh hope and confidence.

CHAPTER XXI

OUR FOURTH CHRISTMAS

(1899)

OUR people continued to make a decided attack on Heathenism. One day several large parties set out in various directions to evangelize. Tausi led one party inland, while Mr Hume and I led another to the far south. A Heathen Chief called Kaukare gave us a warm welcome, and we felt rewarded for our long tramp. While we were resting on the banks of a stream on our way back, a messenger overtook us to say that the tribe to the south of Kaukare's would like us to go there next time and show them pictures. This invitation from a Heathen tribe as yet unvisited greatly cheered us, and we plodded on weary in body but glad in heart. When we reached the top of the last hill on our homeward road, I said to Mr Hume, "If Tausi were here he would say, 'No more sorrow, no more pain,'" a favourite line of Tausi's at the end of some especially toilsome journey. A little further on we passed the inland track, which Tausi had taken in the morning.

Hung up beside the path was a piece of bamboo with a message from Tausi in Aniwan to say that they had passed there about four o'clock, and then came the words, "Nomo soro nomo pen." It was not Aniwan, and it was not Tannese, so I asked Yalemyau if it was Erromangan, but it was not. I read it over and over again, placing the accent on different syllables and running the words into each other. At last it flashed across me, "No more sorrow, no more pain." It was Tausi's favourite quotation, and I knew that he had had a good day.

Another day Nelbini shot a turtle, and decided to present it to the Heathen people of Eneta. The assistant teachers asked permission to go with him to speak for the Worship. I gave them some a b c cards, and away they went full of childlike glee. The turtle was placed in the middle of the village square, and on its back they placed the a b c cards as a symbol of the Worship instead of the Heathen symbol kava. They then addressed the people, and urged them to accept the Worship. At the close the Heathen quickly demolished the turtle, but postponed their decision regarding the Worship!

The visit of a boat full of Aniwans, with their old Chief Lawawa, also did our people good. The aged Chief told me that he had come to see the Worship at Lenakel, and his comment on every-

thing was, "Erefia kage ; erefia kage." (It is very good ; it is very good.)

One day Mr Hume and I rode up to Lokavit to see Mala. We found his work going on splendidly. They had built a fine large Church entirely free of cost, and fully thirty people were clothed and regular attenders at Church and school, and this in the heart of dark Tanna.

About this time there were a good many talks among the Heathen. In these "talks" the Heathen gather together from many villages, to ventilate their grievances and discuss "netik." Whenever our Worshippers heard of such a gathering, they sent a strong deputation. The members listened to all that the Heathen had to say, and then they exposed the foolishness of it, and urged them to give up their bickerings and take the Worship. I have often been surprised to see how respectfully the Heathen listened to these addresses. One noted Heathen, Iemakia, high priest of Maslo, after hearing one of these addresses, rose and said—

"The Worship must not be given up. Numakia has died for it, Seimata has died for it, and now Numanian has died for it. We must not lose what so many have died to gain for us."

Iemakia is still Heathen, but surely the light is breaking in on his soul when he can talk like that.

On Monday, the 4th December, Tom Tanna

died. He had been ill for some time, but was feeling so much better on the Saturday that he prepared some yam heaps in his plantation. This brought on a fresh attack of coughing, and he died on Monday morning. He was full of peace, and eagerly looked forward to his rest with Jesus.

“Misi, my rest is near now,” he said, “Jesus He close up along me, Jesus He strong.”

Good old Tom! We missed him sorely. He was one of the fathers of our Church on West Tanna, and towards the end he seemed to completely overcome the faults which marred his earlier work. Naturally a weak and rather greedy man, he became one of our foremost helpers, a man of faith and power, an earnest humble follower of Jesus. It was Tom who wrote that pathetic appeal to Mr Gray, and who tried to teach his people all he knew. He laboured in the night, he lived to see the dawn, and now the light for which he longed has broken in upon him in perfect fulness. Among the names of sacred memory for West Tanna will always stand that of Nebuk Tom Tanna.

The following Sabbath was a great day for Lonialapin, where Iakar and Lewi were fighting a splendid battle. They were Heathen of the Heathen at Lonialapin. They were really Iakurming people, but when Tom took the Worship they

deserted him and rebuilt an old village further inland. When Iakar came they did not want him, but as he was one of the owners of the land they could not prevent him from settling among them. Nobody wanted the Worship except one woman. But Iakar was nothing daunted. When I asked him how he was getting on, his brave reply was always, "Oh, by the bye Holy Spirit He work along heart belong Him."

One day when I was trying to encourage Iakar in his work he said, "Oh, by and bye we savey, perhaps before Christmas some man he take Jesus." Iakar was not a fluent speaker, but he was a man of faith and a man of God. His faith was rewarded, and on the Sabbath before Christmas a Lonialapin Heathen, called Siak, and his wife put on clothes and joined the Worship. It was a great event in Iakar's life, and the one gleam of encouragement which came to him in all his work. The same day we held a great united service at Lonialapin to open a fine Church which Iakar and Lewi had built almost unaided. We thanked God for the first-fruits of Lonialapin, and prayed for still greater blessing upon the labours of our apostolic teacher.

It was now nearing Christmas, and great preparations were made for our usual gathering. The Worshippers had invited all the Heathen to a great feast, and a labour schooner hearing of this

in North Tanna hastened to Lenakel to improve the occasion in the way of getting recruits. Men came from all our out-stations, and our Mission grounds overflowed with natives in all directions.

On the Sabbath morning a great congregation assembled, and the Church could not hold them all. I first ordained our trusted fellow-worker, Mr Hume, as an elder in the Church, and then I had the supreme joy of baptizing twenty-nine of our converts. This brought the number of our Church members up to sixty-three. And then we sat down around the table of our Lord. These are times the holy joy of which no tongue can tell.

On Christmas morning our people were up long before daylight. As the sun rose the last of the native puddings were safely entombed in the ovens, and by 7.30 the pigs had followed them. At 8 o'clock we held a great thanksgiving service. And then, as the labour vessel's boats made for the shore, we began our games and sports. The Heathen gathered from all quarters, and over a thousand people filled our grounds. All around were dense masses of armed men. The first item was a tug-of-war, and then came the greasy pole, followed by games and contests of all kinds. The Worshipping people threw themselves with great heartiness into everything. The bright, laughing Christians in their many coloured dresses formed a striking contrast to the black, armed ranks of the Heathen.

At first my great anxiety was the labour schooner, but soon a new anxiety made me lift my heart to God in prayer. Some of the Heathen had not met, since war had raged between them. At first they simply glared at each other, and then old hatreds broke out afresh and hot words were spoken. Again and again I started some race on a course that would scatter these excited groups, but they generally managed to come together again. Then I went from group to group and tried to spread a better feeling. About noon I went up to the house to see if the feast was ready, and word came to me that Nakat and another Chief were going to fight in the front paddock. I ran out and found Nakat walking up and down with his loaded musket. He looked decidedly dangerous, but when I spoke to him he was quite civil and promised that there should be no shooting. I then went over and spoke to his enemy. Iavis also harangued both parties, and we got the two bands separated without any further outbreak. Thus our Christmas gathering was nearly turned into a scene of bloodshed in our very garden, but God heard our prayers and all passed off most happily.

The Heathen immensely enjoyed the great feast spread out for them, and then the far-away ones returned to their homes, while our people went on with their games. The most exciting contest was

the tug of war between the men and the women. An even number on each side would begin pulling, and then, as the tug became exciting, there would be a simultaneous rush of men to help the men and women to help the women. One time we counted a hundred men and women all pulling at once. The yelling was tremendous, and they returned to the charge again and again till hands and backs were sore.

In the evening we had a magic lantern entertainment and singing. Despite the threatened outbreak of fighting the day was most successful and it made a marked impression on the Heathen. One of them said a few days after, "We know that the Worship has come to stay. When we saw all the women and the children mixing with the men in their joy, and all so nicely clothed, we felt ashamed, and that was why we stood apart and looked on. Where can we go? We cannot escape the Worship. We must take it in the end."

The next day all were thoroughly exhausted. Everywhere natives were lying sound asleep after their unwonted exertions. Kahwa was sleeping on the back verandah, with a glue-pot for a pillow. Lomai was lying on the beach, fast asleep with his knife stuck into the sand and the end of its upright handle for his pillow. As for ourselves, we enjoyed a quiet day of rest, and we needed it.

A day or two later, Lomai came in to tell us that a woman had fallen on the rocks and broken her baby's head. Mrs Paton and I ran out to find that it was only too true. The little fellow had a round break in his skull about the size of half a crown. He was unconscious, and we had little hope of his recovery, but we washed the wound with carbolic and applied wet cloths. To our surprise and joy consciousness gradually returned, and the baby recovered. He did good service to the Worship by getting his head broken, for he belonged to a very Heathen tribe. His parents now became our fast friends, and one day the father brought down two roosters as a present—a rare sign of gratitude in a Heathen.

About the same time, the minds of the Neriakene tribe were greatly agitated over the subject of Iesua's marriage. Iesua, the first of Mrs Paton's girls, was a young lady with a mind of her own, and while she was quite willing to get married, she did not accept the husband whom they proposed. The result was that a deputation called to interview Iesua. Jimmie and Sam represented the tribe, and Tavo appeared for the proposed husband. We invited them into the study and sent for her ladyship, Mrs Paton and I remaining in to see that she had fair play. The deputation looked very nervous, and Iesua looked decidedly dour. After a lengthy pause they asked Iesua if

she would take their word and marry Nelbini, or take her own way and throw away their word. Iesua flatly refused Nelbini. The deputation looked dour themselves now, and there was a deadlock in the negotiations. At length Mrs Paton suggested that Iesua should be asked if there was anybody else she would like to marry. The answer to this question was a lifting of the eyebrows, which means "yes," and is easier than speech to a native. The next question was, "Pehe?" (who), but much coaxing was needed to get an answer to this question. At last Mrs Paton whispered, "Is it Iau?" Again the eyebrows were raised in assent, and Mrs Paton told the deputation who it was. Iau was one of our assistant teachers, and as "Barkis was willin'," the marriage was arranged accordingly, to the great delight of the young couple.

But now the two of them became terribly dumpy. We asked what was wrong. "Church," was the laconic answer. They were quaking at the thought of standing up in Church to get married. However, a morning or two later both sides turned up in force, and the wedding ceremony was safely carried through. It was an unspeakable relief to the couple to get it over, and they became a very happy and well-matched pair. Iesua still worked in the house, but of course she had also domestic duties of her own to attend to.

The natives had arranged another marriage for that morning, but they forgot to tell the bridegroom, and as he happened to be absent, the wedding had to be postponed!

Tausi also had his matrimonial worries at this time. One day as I was riding with him to Loaneai, the hot sun beating down unmercifully upon our heads, Tausi came alongside my horse and said—

“Misi, have you heard the news?”

“What news?” I asked.

“Did Misis Paton not tell you?”

“Tell me what?” I asked, wondering what in the world Tausi was after. He looked somewhat embarrassed and then said—

“Litsi Sisi has written over from Aniwa to say that it is good that we two get married.”

I asked him what his own heart said in the matter, and he replied—

“Misi, my own heart says nothing. I did not want to get married again yet, but when I read Litsi Sisi’s letter my heart gave a jump, and now I am thinking about it all the time.”

I suggested that he should pray over it, and just do what his heart told him. For weeks Tausi was greatly troubled, and then he thought he would marry Litsi Sisi, but first went over to Aniwa to see how matters stood. The Aniwans were opposed to the marriage, as they did not

want to lose Litsi Sisi from the island. Finally Tausi decided to refuse Litsi Sisi's offer, and he returned to Tanna still a widower.

Sometime after this, Tausi again approached me on the subject of his marriage. He came to me in great perplexity and said—

“Misi, I am listening to my heart all the time, but it tells me nothing.”

“But I thought you had given up Litsi Sisi,” I said in some surprise.

“Yes, Misi,” he answered, “but there are four others who want to marry me, and I don't know which to take: I want to stop as I am for a time, but they will run after me, Misi, and I can't help it.”

Poor Tausi was in a great fix, and for a long time he could not make up his mind. At last a new rival for his affections came upon the scene in the person of Lohman, Numanian's widow. This time Tausi had no difficulty in knowing what his heart said. There were many ups and downs in the negotiations which followed, but at last the match was arranged and the day fixed for the wedding. A few minutes before the service on the happy morning Mrs Paton was surprised to find Tausi cleaning the stove as if nothing special were about to happen. She asked him if he was not nervous, and Tausi went on cleaning in silence, but held up three fingers of



LENAKEL FROM THE HILL



TAUSI AND LOHMAN ON THEIR WEDDING DAY

his right hand—he meant that it was his third marriage and he had got used to the business!

The Towar Ribor people, for some reason or another, were slow in finishing their teacher's house. Each blamed the other for laziness, and professed to be the only zealous one. There was something beneath it all, and a visit to their village convinced us that it would not be wise to settle Kava among them till they became more decided in their attitude. Meanwhile he was learning the language, and doing good work from Lenakel as a centre. On the way home one of our party went down a side track, and returned with some lovely spring water in an old beer bottle. As Mr Hume took a good pull at it, Lomai said with a twinkle in his eye—

“Don't drink too much, Mr Hume, the road is not very good;” Lomai's memories of the old Queensland days often bubbled up.

We next turned our attention to Mala and his people. A note had come from him to say that the natives at Lokavit wanted to buy clothes, and that if we would go by boat to Loanatuan, their nearest passage, they would bring down yam and bananas to that landing. So one morning we sailed to Loanatuan; and there on the beach was Mala, surrounded by a little inner circle of clothed Worshippers and a much larger outer circle of armed and naked Heathen. Mala beamed all

over as he told us that two more had joined the Worship since Christmas, and that all the Worshippers were standing firm. Romana, his wife, and her two children were there also with a good following of women. Brave Mala and his bright-hearted wife : how my heart went out to them at their lonely post ! They are the stuff that heroes are made of, and they already have their jewels for the Master's Crown.

We bought their yam, and then sailed for home with our boat full. On the way we intended to land some food at Loaneai for Tapanua, but the sea had risen and it was too rough for our heavy laden boat to attempt the passage. Tausi then stood up in the boat, and signalled to Tapanua who was standing on the shore. The Aniwans have a perfect code of signals, and can carry on a long conversation in this way. There is a deaf and dumb man on Aniwa, and it was in trying to make him understand their words that this code was built up. First he signalled to Tapanua to come out in a canoe and get some food, but the answer came that the canoes were all unseaworthy. Then Tausi signalled that they were to walk overland and fetch the boat back from Lenakel with food next morning, if the sea went down. All this talk was carried on in dumb show, but next morning Tapanua turned up with a crew for the boat, having perfectly understood Tausi's meaning.

CHAPTER XXII

THE RAGING OF THE HEATHEN

AT this time we entered upon the most troubled period of our Mission life at Lenakel. A Heathen Chief had been pressing his attentions upon Lohman, and when she refused him and married Tausi, he stirred up his fellow-heathen against us. They made this an excuse to aim a terrible blow at the Worship. Various rumours reached us about the raging of the Heathen, but we paid no heed to them. At length a fiendish plot was brought to light. It had been decided by the Heathen to attack us at Lenakel, and shoot at least Tausi and as many others as they could. As soon as the Loaneai Heathen heard the firing at Lenakel, they were to massacre Tapanua and his family. Word was then to be sent to Lokavit and the Heathen there were to murder Mala and his whole family. All was in readiness, the men were told off to do the deed, and a refuge was arranged for them among the inland tribes. For weeks the Heathen watched our house at night, and friendly tribes sent messages to us not to go far from home. Our people rallied round us, and

our kitchen was often full of Worshippers who slept all night about the premises. Several times the Heathen approached very near to us, but they could not escape the vigilance of our people, and days lengthened into weeks without their being able to carry out their plot.

I at once called a meeting of our teachers and deacons, to pray and deliberate about the matter. We found that one of the instigators of this plot was Iauhnam, a member of the Candidates' class, though I had long had doubts as to his sincerity. I sent word to Iauhnam that he must at once undo his evil work, and that if any shooting took place his name would be the first to be reported to the man-of-war. Iauhnam confessed his guilt; but he was deeply penitent, and really did all in his power to frustrate the plot which he had helped to originate. It was for us all a time of much prayer, and we felt that God was near to us.

When the Heathen failed to get at us at Lenakel, they began to plot against us when we went abroad. They sent word to Kaukare, in the far south, that if any of us came to his place he was to shoot us. But Kaukare replied that we were his friends, and that whatever they might do to us in other parts, in his territory we were safe. At last the Heathen had to confess themselves beaten. They had made a really determined attempt to get rid of the Wor-

ship, but all their fury could do was to make the Worship stronger. As the atmosphere cleared, Lomai, Nilua and I visited one of the most disaffected districts, and we were received at first doubtfully and then cordially. While we were sitting in the village square, the Chief, who was the main cause of all the trouble, suddenly appeared with his gun. When he saw us he stopped short, and stood eyeing us earnestly. Then he said something to one of his followers, who at once dropped out of sight. I did not like the look of things, but sat watching the Chief. Lomai then said something to him, and he came towards us and sat down. He then became very friendly, and the other warrior who had dropped out of sight so mysteriously joined us, and turned out to be the father of the little boy who got his head broken. Our visit did good, and gradually all danger passed away. We learned two things in these few weeks. First, that if they could, the Heathen would not hesitate to sweep us in blood from their island; and second, that God reigns, and can make even the raging of the Heathen work out the advancement of His Kingdom.

One day, after a stormy debate with the Heathen at Lomanian, Lomai stood up and said, "Now, let us worship God," and he gave out as the opening hymn—

“Why rage the heathen? and vain things
Why do the people mind?
Kings of the earth do set themselves,
And princes are combined,

“To plot against the Lord, and his
Anointed, saying thus,
Let us asunder break their bands,
And cast their cords from us.”

It was a fine scene, and the Heathen must have felt that here was a spirit that was too strong for them. They listened quietly. The whole thing revealed the weakness of the Heathen, and the strength of the Worshipping party in the face of danger and opposition. And we thanked God for His loving care of us in these troubled times.

The Heathen, baffled in their thirst for our blood, now held high riot in other ways. Three men were shot on the other side of Tanna, and two of the bodies fell into the hands of the enemy. These bodies were passed from village to village right across Tanna, till one of them was eaten not far from Loaneai. The Heathen attended from far and near, and pieces of the body were sent throughout our district as a great delicacy. Two of the leading Heathen on the hills above Loaneai were so disgusted with these proceedings, they renounced Heathenism on the spot and joined the Worship.

The second body was sent to a village in Lomai's tribe, and was to be eaten on Sabbath. We heard about it in the morning, so with all the strength

we could muster we hurried up to Ikunala to stop, if possible, the horrid feast. It horrified us all the more to hear that the body was that of a man who had been a Worshipper, and that it was a fortnight since he had been killed. As we neared the village we met bands of Heathen returning from their ghastly sight-seeing. Some of the men were carrying their little children, whom they had taken to view the body as it hung from the banyan tree. Lomai, who was leading our party, quickened his pace lest we should be too late. At last we dashed into the square, but our approach had been signalled, and some of the natives had bolted with the body. The fearful stench told us that it could not be very far away, and Lomai ran along a path leading inland, followed by myself and some others. The Heathen picked up their guns and ran along among the reeds on either side of our track, and for a few minutes things looked black. But our determined attitude overawed them. A turn in the path hid Lomai for a minute, and when I came up with him he was standing on a rise, with a dip in the path between him and as evil-looking a group of savages as I have ever seen. Along a side track a savage was stealing up on him with his gun, but Nelbini, who was just behind me, called out and asked him what he was doing. The man looked sheepish and then dropped out of sight.

Lomai and I now rushed up to the group in front, and demanded to know what they had done with the body. They pointed to the right, and Lomai ran forward in that direction. Suddenly he turned back with a look of horror in his face, and said to me—

“Awe, Misi Paton, awe, Misi Paton,” and then burst into tears.

As he passed me and went back to the track, I went forward and saw the saddest sight I have ever seen on Tanna—a human body fast decomposing, tied like a pig by the hands and knees to a long pole. My whole heart sickened, and I did not measure my words as I stormed at the diabolical wretches whom we had overtaken in their horrible work. I ordered them to carry the body back to the village for burial. They hesitated, but we were determined, and at length they yielded. Stuffing their noses with strong-scented leaves, they lifted their gruesome burden and followed us back to the village. There I could not help giving vent to my feelings, in a terrible denunciation of the Chief for his abominable wickedness. There are times when nothing will stem the tide of righteous indignation, and who could be calm or measure words with such a scene before his eyes? The Chief was thoroughly cowed, and his followers dug a grave just outside the village square. We then sang the 121st Psalm, and committed the body to the earth

in prayer. It was a terrible funeral, and most of us were ill long before it was over. After the funeral we held a service, when I was able to speak in sorrow and in love rather than in anger. Oh! rise up, ye people of Christ, and in His name and strength put an end to this horror of Heathenism.

Things now became very unsettled among the Heathen. Besides the desire to shoot us, there was a rumour that Mr Worthington also was to be shot. This kept our friends in anxiety and suspense for a time, but gradually the rumours died down, and a more settled feeling prevailed among the coast natives. Inland, however, there was an uneasy feeling for some time yet. Three Aniwans came across from Weasisi to Lenakel one day, passing through Ikunala where we had prevented the cannibal feast. Tausi advised them to return by a different road, and it was well that they did so, for the Ikunala people watched the track for hours next day to shoot them as they returned. Warning also reached us, from friendly natives on the other side, that our lives would be taken if we went inland. All this showed how bitter the Heathen were, and how careful we had to be in going amongst them. It was because they now realised fully how utterly opposed the Gospel was to all their evil conduct, and that they must fight it to the death or yield to it. It was

really a healthy sign, and showed more than anything how strong a hold the Gospel was getting in the district. Still it also meant a good deal of anxiety for our people and ourselves. But God was for us, and we knew that the Heathen could do nothing to us without His will.

But over against all this bitter opposition we had much to cheer us. Our people were faithful and full of brightness. The Candidates' class was growing steadily, and the school was increasing at such a rate that our new Church became uncomfortably crowded. At Loaneai also there was much life and movement in the work. Several noted Heathen joined the Worship, and this greatly weakened the Heathen party in that district.

But the fiercest opposition, and the most remarkable growth took place in North Tanna. When the Loanatit tribe came to Lenakel, an allied tribe just to the north of them divided into two, part coming to Lenakel, and part remaining at Lopilpil, their home. Amongst those who remained was one Worshipper called Charlie, and he gathered a little company together Sabbath by Sabbath. There was constant coming and going between Lopilpil and Lenakel on the part of our Worshippers, and these visits greatly stimulated Charlie and his company. Then a fine young fellow called Dick Nimiling returned from

Queensland where he had been converted under the teaching of Mrs Mackenzie at Bundaberg. Dick joined Charlie in his work, and the Worshipping party at Lopilpil grew by leaps and bounds.

This growth of the Worship enraged the Heathen, who drove the coast people from their villages, and compelled them to take refuge among the caves and rocks on the shore. This only strengthened Charlie and his followers, and the Worship continued to grow. Then the Heathen stole up one day, and from the top of the cliff they fired a volley into the Worshippers as they were holding a service in the camp below. By the loving care of God not one was hit, though the bullets fell right in their midst. Dick and Charlie were nothing daunted, and still the Worship grew.

Then began a remarkable work among the Heathen there. Various things had prepared the way for this: Yalemyau's faithful work, the deep impression caused by Numanian's death, the constant intercourse between Lenakel and Lopilpil, the splendid work of Charlie and Dick, and the outbreak of dysentery among the Heathen. These and other means were used by the Holy Spirit to arouse the conscience of the people, and they flocked to Lopilpil to join the Worship. Truly the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church. Boatloads came to Lenakel and to Loaneai, in-

cluding some of the leading natives from Lonebotbot, where Numanian received his mortal wound. It was no small joy to see in our Lenakel Church one of the very men who had come upon us with loaded guns on that memorable day. He was not the murderer, but the one who was touched by our earnest appeal. They begged us to settle a teacher at Lopilpil.

Seeing this great movement beginning, I went to Lopilpil myself one day to investigate. I was simply astounded to see the work of God in these Heathen hearts. About sixty clothed people crowded around us, and eagerly listened to the Gospel message. They were living in caves, and many of them were ill with dysentery, but their one cry was—

“Send us the Gospel, or we perish.” They regarded the plague as a judgment upon them for their evil conduct, and they said—

“If you do not send us a teacher, we will all come to Lenakel.”

We thanked God for this wonderful work of grace, and leaving a good supply of medicine, we pulled back to Lenakel to take measures to meet the need that had arisen. They sent a messenger after us to say—

“If you do not send us a teacher, we will seize the next one that visits us in the boat, and detain him by force.”

We then held a great meeting at Lenakel to consider the whole question. After much prayer I called upon the northern people to speak. They pled hard for a teacher, saying—

“We must have the Worship. If we cannot get teachers we will all come to Lenakel. But in that case there would be no check on the Heathenism in our district, and things would go from bad to worse. Let us have teachers and we will hold our ground, and the Word of Jesus will spread among the inland Heathen.”

Kawa and Iakave then rose and stated their desire to go and take up the work at Lopilpil. We were deeply moved, and after much prayer we decided to send these two Aniwān teachers to Lopilpil. The delegates from the north at once returned to Lopilpil with the glad news, and next day they came back to Lenakel to say that in one week a house would be ready for the teachers.

All this lifted up our hearts in adoring praise to God for all His wonderful works. Kawa was to have gone to Towar Ribor, but as the door was closed there for the present, we were glad to send him to Lopilpil.

A war now threatened to break out to the south of us. The Nouramene fired at a man belonging to the Nelpaimene. Lomai and Nilua at once visited both tribes. They came to the Nelpai-

me in time to learn that a war party had just gone out to attack the Nouramene. They urged them to give up the fight, and after some earnest words from Lomai, the Chief sent a messenger to recall the warriors. Lomai then conducted a service with them, and the people promised to give up fighting. The same day some of us visited the tribes to the far south, while a third party visited the tribes in between. It was a glorious day, and we rejoiced in the manifest blessing of God.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE FELLOWSHIP OF SUFFERING

IT was now nearing steamer-time, and we were busy preparing for our annual visit to Aniwa, when our little Frankie took ill. Our hearts sank when we found he had caught the prevailing dysentery. Despite all that we could do he grew rapidly weaker. Then the steamer came with Dr Ewen M'Kenzie. He was very kind, and gave us invaluable advice. He thought the worst was over, and advised us to go on to Aniwa as we had intended. It was a great joy to us to welcome Dr and Mrs M'Kenzie to the New Hebrides as fellow-workers of the Fund.

The Tannese greatly touched us by their sympathy and thoughtfulness. When the sail cry was heard from the point, not one shout was raised on the Station or in any of the villages around us. The natives came quietly and told us, lest the shouting should disturb the little sick one. Many of the women were in tears when we went into the boat, and Iesua cried as if her heart would break when she said good-bye to little Frankie. When we were half-way out to the

ship, a faint cheer was heard from the shore. "They have taken a long time to think of it," said one of the passengers. No, they had only waited till the boat was far enough away, so that the cheer would not disturb their beloved "Faranke."

When Captain Todd saw how ill our little one was, he very kindly altered his plans and steamed straight to Aniwa to save us a night on board. He also placed his cabin entirely at our disposal. All on board showed us great kindness. Mr Hume landed with Mr Watt's mails at Port Resolution as we passed, and in the evening we arrived at Aniwa.

The next few days were sad ones for us. Not only was our baby very ill, but we found that the Aniwans had fallen into sin. Two Aniwans had gone so far as to send food to "netik" men on Tanna, that they might act against three of their fellow-islanders. The Tannese offered to destroy the food, if the Aniwans would pay them money. The whole island met, the elder bowed before the storm, and the blackmail was paid to the Tanna "netik"-makers. It was a great fall, and I called upon the whole island to unite in a week of humiliation and prayer. Every day the Church was full, and I solemnly showed them how terrible had been their fall. They were deeply penitent. Elder and people humbled themselves before God,

and cried earnestly for forgiveness and for a special outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Their prayers were answered, and God overruled this sad fall to draw the people very near to Himself.

All this time our little one was sinking. Night and day we battled with the disease, and prayed for recovery. But God willed otherwise, and at 4.35 in the morning of the 23rd of April our little darling passed away. It was a sore blow to us, but God comforted us with a loving tenderness, and we felt His presence more real than ever before. It was agony to see our little one suffer, and we thanked God when he was at rest. The blessedness of the change made it easier for us to bear our sorrow.

The sad news soon spread, and from all parts of the island the natives came to show their sympathy. Many came into the room and sat down in silence, with the tears running down their faces. Nalausi and the teachers dug the grave, while Mrs Paton and I made the little coffin. We buried him beside Lena and Walter, my little sister and brother, and the natives brought lovely white coral to beautify his grave. How empty the house seemed when we went back to it!

The next day the Aniwans brought us a present of yams and fowls to express their sympathy with us in our sorrow. On the Friday Mr Macmillan arrived from Weasisi, and his loving

sympathy greatly cheered us. He returned next day through a heavy sea. We sorely missed our little Frankie, but we thanked God for all that he had been to us these eighteen months, and for all that he had taught us. We praised Him, too, for the softening influence our wee bairn was upon the natives. Unconsciously he did his part in the work of Lenakel, and he did it better than we did ours.

One Thursday evening, the steamer came to take us back to Tanna. The Aniwans carried all our things down to the boatlanding, and then we had a quiet moment beside our little darling's grave before following ourselves. It was never so hard to leave Aniwa before! It was dark as the boat neared the steamer, but officers and passengers crowded to look over the side. No question was asked; they saw that our baby was not, and in silence they shook hands. From the captain downwards we received such kindness and sympathy as we shall never forget. Mr and Mrs Leggatt were also on board, and their sympathy was specially tender, as they had so lately passed through a like sorrow.

At nine o'clock we reached Weasisi, and Mr and Mrs Macmillan came off to see us. It was after midnight when we reached Port Resolution, and Mr and Mrs Leggatt went ashore. Soon we saw a dim object on the water nearing the ship;



LANDING PLACE, ANIWA

then the swish of oars told us that a boat was coming, and Mr Watt's cheery voice sounded through the darkness. He and Mr Hume were soon on board, and it did us good to see them.

At daylight we reached Lenakel. As we neared the shore in the ship's boat the *Pioneer* met us. They stopped pulling and eagerly looked for Frankie; then they looked at each other in silence, and slowly turning round pulled for the shore. I asked Tausi if all were well at Lenakel, and he called out over his shoulder as he steered the *Pioneer* through the passage—

“Nakata is dead, Nerua is shot, Saulam is dead, Naupum is dead, Lamou is dying, and few of us are not sick.”

Our hearts were sad before, but they were sadder still at such a report. On the beach the people crowded round us and shook hands in silence, then Iesua burst into a heartrending wail, which was taken up by all the other women along the beach. Lomai, who was always little Frankie's favourite, bowed his head on the gunwale of the boat and sobbed as if his heart would break. It made us love the Tannese more deeply than ever for the sympathy they showed us in our time of sorrow.

The work had gone on well in our absence. Lomai and the teachers had taken Kawa and Iakave to Lopilpil, and they had received a

glorious welcome. The Heathen on the mountains were so enraged at this that they shot one of the Worshippers a few miles south of Lopilpil. But our teachers were safe. Nakata had died of dysentery a few weeks after they landed, and this was a terrible blow to our little band of workers in the North. But they stuck to it bravely, and blessing upon blessing was showered down upon them in the work. One day our hearts were gladdened to hear that a service had been held, by a great company of Worshippers, at Lonebotbot. There were still some wild Heathen among the mountains, but the shore people were coming in fast.

All the following week, we battled against the terrible dysentery. Most of the Worshippers pulled through under treatment, but the Heathen died in scores. The result was much "netik" talk and ill feeling. At length I caught the prevailing trouble myself, and for a week or more the whole work of the Station fell on Mrs Paton's shoulders. But by the blessing of God I recovered, and all went well. The day after I took ill, one of our little house girls bolted. Her guardian had told her that if she remained near the sea she would die. However, Lomai brought her back, and we had no more trouble.

About this time Mr Forlong and Mr Carruthers arrived from Loanbakel to say that the people there wished to come and settle at Lenakel. The

Lenakel people gathered to discuss the matter. The result was a cordial invitation to the northern people to come and settle among them if they so desired. Mr Forlong and his friend, who had come to the islands with him to do Mission work, returned with this message to the people at Loanbakel. A few days later, Mr Carruthers and one or two of the Loanbakel people came on ahead of the others to start the building of the new village. We then got a band of workers to clear the place. Iavis superintended the work, aided by Mr Carruthers and his people.

Shortly thereafter, Mr Carruthers and I set out for Itua, where Mr Forlong was camping with the Loanbakel natives. On the road we called at Lopilpil and found the work going on well and the teachers full of hope and enthusiasm. In the evening we reached Itua, and were welcomed by Mr Forlong and Mr and Mrs M'Kenzie, who had come down like Mr Carruthers to do Mission work in the islands. We spent the night there, and next day we set sail for Lenakel. Mr Worthington had kindly lent us his boat, so we were able to bring a good many of the people with us. Some, however, remained behind unwilling to leave their homes. A heavy squall struck us, but through the mercy of our God we arrived safely with our heavy freight of men, women, and children. The M'Kenzies and Mr Forlong and Mr Carruthers

came with me to Lenakel to see their people thoroughly established in their new home before going on to Malekula to do Mission work there.

The steamer now called to take us to Synod, and we had a happy and busy time at Port Resolution. Here we were glad to welcome my sister to the islands as Mrs Gillan.

A week after our return, a Chief called Nakat came and asked for a teacher. It was the same Nakat who once very nearly turned our Christmas gathering into a scene of bloodshed. This man was a great fighter, and his name had become a terror to the tribes for miles around. Many an appeal had been made to me to get Nakat taken away by the "Manowau" (man-of-war), and then "all Tanna he stop quiet." It was with great joy, therefore, that I heard Nakat's request for a teacher. His second in command was Jimmie Palmer, our old friend of the Iounmene. I had no teacher to send, but Nausian, one of our assistant teachers volunteered to fill the difficult and dangerous post, till I could get a fully trained teacher. I gladly accepted Nausian's offer, and he entered upon a period of heroic service for Christ, and Nakat, Jimmie Palmer and another Chief, called Iauiko, all joined the Worship under Nausian's teaching.

I had learned at Synod that Mr Gillies was absolutely without teachers at Kwamera, so I told

the assistant teachers of the need, and called for two volunteers for a year's service there. Iau and Iesua at once volunteered along with Kahwa. Iesua was our first house girl, our little Frankie's nurse and the one who next to Lomai loved him most. Iau was our first Tanna kitchen boy, and he and Kahwa were among the first to offer themselves to be trained as teachers. We were deeply touched at their readiness to go, and after a farewell service in the Church, and a parting prayer on the beach, we set out for Kwamera in the *Pioneer*. We had a good passage and spent a happy Sabbath with our fellow-workers there.

On the Monday morning, we bade farewell to our three spiritual children. Iau said good-bye with his hat over his eyes. Iesua kept up bravely till the boat shot out from the landing, and then she utterly broke down. The last thing we saw, as we pulled away, was three figures standing far out on the rocks and waving till they gradually faded into the distance. They were only half trained native teachers, with much to learn and much to unlearn, and another might have sighed over their shortcomings. But to us who had the joy of leading them out of Heathen darkness, and knew how immeasurably they had risen in these four years, they were inexpressibly dear. They were our first converts to leave home and friends for Christ's sake, and with all their imperfections

we honoured them for their willingness to follow Christ at His call.

On the return journey to Lenakel, Mrs Paton became very ill, and the last part of the voyage was made through a heavy sea. But our boat behaved nobly, and we arrived safely. Christians abroad do not realize how much depends on the Missionary's boat, or there would not be the difficulty there sometimes is in raising sums for good, seaworthy boats. We have never ceased to be thankful for our good boat *Pioneer*, which has brought us safely through so many wild and troubled seas.

Heathen anger was again roused by the progress of our work, and at Lemrau an attempt was made to shoot one of our teachers. A man was about to fire at him as he was holding service, but the old Chief's grandson stood up and forbade the deed. The Christians quietly closed their service and went on their way.

Our faithful teacher Iakar now became very ill. His malady resisted all treatment, and one day Mr Hume went up to Iakar's village and led him down to Lenakel on horseback. Iakar was so weak that he could hardly sit in the saddle. Then anxious days and nights followed. Lewi, his wife, nursed him most tenderly and faithfully, but still he grew worse. We had several other serious cases on the Station, so that we were not

a little glad to see the man-of-war steam into our bay one evening. Mr Hume at once went off and brought the doctor ashore, and I can never forget the kindly help and advice which he so readily gave us. He did all that was possible in the short time that he was able to remain on shore, and then we had a rough pull back to the ship in the dark. But despite all our efforts Iakar became steadily worse, and Monday, July the 23rd, he passed away.

In Iakar we lost one of our best teachers. His post was a most difficult one, and no one else could fill it. His tribe are bitterly opposed to the Worship, and with the exception of Siak and his family, not one of them would have anything to do with him. In fact, as they could not drive Iakar out, they left the village themselves. Lomai asked them where they could go to escape the Worship, as it was now all over Tanna. But Iakar never became discouraged. His faith and courage were magnificent. Why he was taken away we cannot tell. His village is now a deserted clump of crumbling houses, and the Church stands empty. But God makes no mistakes, and His purpose never fails. Iakar won Siak, and through Siak the tribe may yet be brought to Christ.

Another sad event was the death of Nelbini. He was ill for months, and towards the end he

was full of joy at the prospect of going to Jesus. He said that for the work's sake he would like to stay, but that for his own he would like to go and be with Jesus.

"My heart wants to go, my whole body wants to go," he said ; "but it is with Jesus. If He wants me to stay He will make me better ; if He wants to take me, my heart is glad to go."

His peace and joy were an inspiration to us all. We missed him sorely in the work, but his happy death was an untold influence for good among our people. He was the seventh of our beloved fellow-workers to die within two years. He was one of the fathers of Lenakel, and he has gone to his reward. At the last day many shall rise and call him blessed, for he led them out of darkness into light.

Another deep sorrow to us at this time was the serious illness of Mr Hume. He had often suffered terribly from fever and ague, but now he completely broke down. At one time we did not think he would live till the steamer came. But God had mercy upon us, and spared us this sorrow. He was, however, too ill to think of remaining on Tanna, and was reluctantly compelled to hand me in his resignation. It was a great blow to the work. Mr Hume had been with us from the first beginnings of our work at Lenakel, and he was part of it all. He was

always a willing and earnest helper, and was deeply beloved by the people. Great and universal was their sorrow, when I told them that Mr Hume was going to leave us.

About this time, our hearts were gladdened beyond all telling by the glorious news from Port Resolution that fourteen natives had been baptized there by Mr Watt. At last the harvest so long prayed for was beginning. God's servants had toiled faithfully and heroically through the long night, and now the day was breaking. From end to end of the New Hebrides, as the news spread, hearts rose in gratitude to God, and in sympathy with Mr Watt in his great joy.

CHAPTER XXIV

LOMAI AND IAVIS ORDAINED AS ELDERS

(1900)

ON Tuesday, the 4th of July, we began a week of special services, in preparation for our Communion season the following Sabbath. The natives attended well, and their numbers grew as the people arrived from the various out-stations. On Tuesday we had 192 present, and by Sabbath there were 284. The sifting of Candidates resulted in 13 being accepted for baptism. It was an intensely solemn and stirring service. We did not realize before what strides the Worship had taken. Our membership had risen to 73, and to these were added 13 of Mr Forlong's members from Loanbakel. Our Candidates' class now numbered 170, and our Worshippers about 400. For all this we thanked God and took courage for the future. We greatly enjoyed the presence and help of Mr and Mrs M'Kenzie at this season. The time they spent with us was not only a joy to ourselves, but a great help to all the work.

The work was now growing so much, and Lomai

and Iavis had proved themselves such true men of God, that I decided to ordain them as elders. After a long talk, in which I explained the duties and responsibilities of the eldership, I asked them if they were willing to undertake the office. Lomai said to me—

“ Misi, we cannot go back in the work of Jesus. You first baptized us, then you made us deacons, and now you have asked us to be elders. We are not fit to be elders, but we cannot go back. We must go forward, and we must just pray hard to Jesus to make us more fit. We want to do everything you tell us, and we know that Jesus will help us.”

And Iavis said that his heart was one with Lomai's.

The next day I told the people in Church what I had decided to do, and I called upon any one who knew anything against the character of Lomai or Iavis to come forward and speak before the Sabbath. No one made any charge, so on the day named a great congregation gathered at Lenakel. The people solemnly promised to obey Lomai and Iavis in the Lord, and I then ordained them as elders in the West Tanna Church. It was a great day for Lenakel, and it marked a distinct advance in our work. Lomai and Iavis had a new standing among the people, and it was fine to see how the natives looked up to and

obeyed them. It was a great joy to see them rising step by step in the work, and they were worthy of all the honour and responsibility that we could lay upon them.

On the 11th of September the steamer came, and with it the dreaded hour of parting with our beloved fellow-worker, Mr Hume. We had already held a farewell meeting in the Church, when Mr Hume, though very weak, was able to say a word or two. Lomai got up to interpret, but after vainly trying to speak, he burst into tears, and sat down, saying—

“Let us remember the words of Mr Hume.”

The whole congregation wept with real sorrow, and it must have gladdened Mr Hume's heart to see the love with which the people regarded him. We all felt deeply that though Mr Hume might go far afield in life's journeys, he would never be better loved than at Lenakel. And he has lived ever since in the hearts and in the prayers of the people.

When the steamer came, the natives crowded round the boat to say good-bye, but I lost no time in getting under weigh as I feared the strain on Mr Hume in his weak state. Just as we got him alongside he collapsed, but a strong restorative brought him round, and in a few minutes we placed him safely on board. Before we left the ship he was able to sit up, and looked more like

himself again. It was hard to say good-bye after four years of such happy fellowship in the work. But it had to be.

By the same steamer we sent away our first small shipment of arrowroot. As there was not enough to fill a cask, we suggested to Iavis that the people should bring some curios to fill the vacant space. In a few minutes we had enough native dresses, mats, baskets, etc., to fill nearly two casks. The whole was to be sold towards the printing of Matthew and other translations.

The next day, Naupum presented Lomai with a fine little son, and he named him John after my father. A few days later, Iavis became the proud father of a little daughter, and he called her Rebecca. The two elders stood side by side in Church, and offered their children to the Lord in baptism.

Two days after the steamer left, Mrs Paton and I started for White Sands, with a party of nine volunteers, to help in building Mr Macmillan's new Station. Mr and Mrs M'Kenzie kindly took charge at Lenakel, during our absence, aided by Lomai as interpreter and general right hand man. We rode for the first four miles and then tramped for seven hours. As we had to carry our tents and baggage we were pretty tired when we reached White Sands, but a warm welcome made up for it all. Before dark we had our tents

up, and were quite snug. It was a most picturesque camp. The dining-room was built of corrugated iron, and the chief corner-post was a cocoanut tree. When the wind blew the tree swayed, and with it the whole house. Between the swaying of the walls and the slant of the floor, we often felt as if we were on board a ship heeling over to the wind. Our tent was also on the hillside in among banana trees, and every time we woke up we had to haul ourselves up to the head of our stretchers, for we slid down in our sleep owing to the slope of the floor. Our second tent and a boat turned upside down served as sleeping quarters for our Lenakel natives, while a hot volcanic spring supplied us with water.

Here we spent a happy fortnight, building from morning to night on week days, and spending both Sabbaths at Port Resolution with Mr and Mrs Gillies. We were specially glad to see our old friends Iau and Iesua and Kahwa at the Port, and to hear a good account of their work. At the end of the first week, we sent our natives back with a message to Lomai to call for volunteers to cut a horse track right through from Lenakel to White Sands. The people responded nobly, and just after dark on Monday Lomai and Tausi arrived with the horses and thirty-eight natives from Lenakel. They had been at it since daylight, and had cut a good road right across Tanna.

Lomai and nineteen of the others returned next day to complete the road, while the other twenty stayed on to give a few days' help at White Sands. The natives worked well, and they did it all for nothing.

We were quite sorry when the fortnight came to an end, and would gladly have stayed longer, but we were needed at Lenakel. We had a lovely ride back, along the newly-made horse track. It was rough in parts, but a great improvement on tramping. Not long after we left White Sands, we saw some leaves on the side of the track. They were signals, to their allies, that an attacking party had gone inland that morning. It saddened our hearts to think of these poor Tannese shooting one another down, and all because they believed in that wretched "netik." A little further on, Nilua found a pronged stick placed in a certain way which meant that a man was to be shot on that track. He at once broke the prong and negated the signal.

About half way across, we met some natives who had been waiting there since daylight to see the horses, or "Big Nannies" as one old man called them. Their excitement was tremendous, and they begged us to take the horses round a large open space, while they looked on from trees and other points of vantage. Great was the yelling when my wife and I cantered round to

please them. One youngster was so excited that he fell off a tree on to his head, but he scrambled up again in dire terror, not even waiting to rub his bump!

We arrived at Lenakel quite fresh, and found all well. We were saddened, however, to hear that war had broken out in the far south. Kaukare and Siaka, two great fighting Chiefs, were filling bags with copra on the beach. After a while Kaukare went home, leaving Siaka to finish the job. All unknown to them, some natives from another tribe had been watching them from the bush. One of these now came forward and chattered away to Siaka, as if he were his greatest friend. Suddenly a rifle shot rang out, and Siaka fell dead. It was a dastardly deed, and was followed by fierce war between the two tribes. Kaukare and his party surrounded the village of the murderers, and were just preparing to rush, when a poor little girl stumbled upon them and gave the alarm. She paid for it dearly, for the next moment she fell pierced with three bullets.

A message also came from Nausian at Imwanelhiaune, his out-station in the heart of Tanna, that his people were threatened from north and south. I sent word to Tapanua at Loaneai to gather his Worshippers and visit the tribe to the north, while the rest of us visited the tribe to the south. The result of our pleading and prayer was that

the war-clouds passed away and peace was assured.

But Nausian himself was now greatly tried. He had left his wife, Kaupa, in his old village because she had a sore foot and could not walk home with him. Nausian's relatives are bitter Heathen, and they had done all they could to vex his soul and rouse the old nature in him. But he remained firm. Then they tried to tamper with his wife, and his half-brother got her to promise to run away with him. Nausian heard of this in time, and came to Lenakel to ask our prayers and help. A couple of years before he would have settled the matter by putting a bullet through his wife, and this is what the wily Heathen expected he would do. But they little knew the power of the Gospel to change even a Nausian heart. We met in the Church for prayer, and then the teachers, elders and I went up to the village. The Heathen bolted, but we had a long talk with his wife and brought her back with us to Lenakel, where she remained till her foot was well enough for her to return to Imwanelhiaune. Nausian then returned to his post in great joy.

But his troubles were not over yet. The Heathen having failed to move him through his wife, now kidnapped one of his adopted children to bring him up according to their own ways. Nausian again came to Lenakel, and asked us to

pray for him while he hunted for his boy. He found him and brought him to Lenakel to live under our care. Then he went back to the village to see Tavo, his half-brother. Tavo was in a great fury, and got his gun to shoot Nausian. But our brave teacher calmly faced his would-be murderer, and said—

“If you shoot me, Tavo, you will do yourself far greater harm than you can do to me. You can only hurt my body, but you will hurt your own soul.” Tavo trembled all over, and then lowered his gun. Nausian then came back to Lenakel, and told me what had happened. We prayed together about it, and I advised him to remain at Lenakel overnight, and we would have a united prayer meeting in the Church in the evening. Nausian agreed to this, and I did not see him again till evening, when he came in late to the prayer meeting. The brave fellow had gone straight from the study to Tavo’s village, where he gathered the people together for prayer. And they listened quietly, feeling no doubt that the Worship that could so change a man was too strong for them. The next day Nausian returned to his lonely post, full of faith and joy. That man was the stuff out of which God’s heroes are made!

The steamer now arrived with the long expected copies of Matthew’s Gospel printed in

the language of the people. By the light of the lantern, we opened the box on the beach, and excited natives crowded round. Print and binding were all that could be desired, and the natives rejoiced to have a fresh part of the Word of God in their own mother tongue. By return, we were able to send the £28 raised by the natives to pay for it. The book was published by the Melbourne Auxiliary of the British and Foreign Bible Society, and the Rev. F. R. M. Wilson, my old minister, kindly corrected the proofs.

A week later, Mrs Paton and I visited Lokavit. We found Mala and Romana in great spirits, because a new tribe had just joined the Worship. After a service with the people, Nouka, the old Chief, said—

“ Misi, long ago you came over the mountains and told me to give up fighting and take the Worship. I wanted to take your word, but the tribes around kept me back. Then you came to me from the sea and planted the Worship here, and left Mala to teach us. I have now taken the Worship which you first brought from over the mountains and then from the sea. The Worship is now strong and will soon fill the whole land.”

The old Chief referred to the fact, that at first we visited him by the inland road over the mountains, and then later by the shore road.

Mala had now seventy people attending school and services. He was a faithful and able teacher, and we thanked God for the abundant blessing on his work.

'Our school at Lenakel was also making great progress.

Mrs Paton began a great battle to get the natives into more cleanly habits, for they are by nature indescribably dirty. We now made a rule, that hands and faces must be washed before school in the morning. At six o'clock, the conch-shell was blown, and then a long straggling line of 'sleepy natives trooped down to the sea and ducked their heads under water, and scrubbed their hands and faces. The result was almost incredible, not only to our eyes, but also to our noses! We also instituted a regular washing day for clothes, and woe betide the native who came to school with dirty face or clothes. We have by no means reached perfection yet in the matter of cleanliness, but we have at least made a beginning.

CHAPTER XXV

OUR FIFTH CHRISTMAS

(1900)

THE year 1900 ended amid the horrors of Heathenism, but also amid many cheering signs of progress. For example, a Heathen in Lomai's tribe decided to take a second wife. But his first wife heard of his purpose, and in the dead of night she stole up to the poor woman whom he intended to take and brutally hacked her with a tomahawk. I was ill at the time, but Lomai took up medicine and tended her carefully. All her Heathen friends deserted her, and she lingered on a few days and then died, after giving birth to her dead baby. The Heathen seemed to think that the wretched murderess had not only acted within her rights, but had done a praiseworthy deed.

Another day, an old Chief got into trouble for "netik-making." His tribe had had enough of fighting, so they deserted him. His enemies shot his eldest son and burned his village. For days the old Chief hid in gullies to save his second son.

He refused to take refuge with us, and after sore privations he accepted the invitation of another villainous old Chief and took shelter with him.

In Mala's district a young Chief was suspected of "netik"-making, so they shot his wife as a warning. Then a man came to him with some food, and told him that it belonged to the murderer of his wife. The young Chief fell into the trap, and took the food to make "netik." A few days later he was shot dead in his plantation.

But the Worshippers at Mala's Station were vigorous and aggressive. They built a fine three-roomed native house for us beside the Church, and showed eagerness and enthusiasm in the work of evangelizing their neighbours. I had promised to pay for the house in clothes, and one day Mala came down with a list of sixty workers to be paid. We were almost out of clothes, but happened to have some print. Mrs Paton and her girls set to work, and sewed dresses and jumpers enough to pay all. The girls were becoming experienced sewers, and Wahu was quite at home with the machine.

Much bloodshed was saved by the vigilance and earnestness of the Worshippers. For example, one day Lomai and Iavis heard that a party had set out to shoot a man a few miles south of here. They at once tracked the would-be murderers to their ambush, and persuaded



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them to give up their evil purpose. Another day, they heard that an old Chief, called Tavo, was going to be shot by his own people. They hurried to the spot and spoke and prayed earnestly with the Heathen. There was a long day's talking, and then the Heathen said—

“We will give Tavo his choice between two things, death or the Worship. If he joins the Worship and leaves “netik” we will spare him ; if he remains a Heathen we will shoot him.”

On hearing this decision, Tavo came to the conclusion that the Worship was the lesser of the two evils, and so he chose it. He joined the Worship to save his life, but he soon became really interested, and now he is an earnest seeker after truth. It is not often that the Heathen win recruits for us ! It showed that even the Heathen now knew that if a man became a Worshipper he was not to be feared any more, as an enemy. They were beginning to see how completely it changed a man's life, and surely this was a grand testimony to the living reality of the Christian life of our people.

All this time my health was getting worse and worse. The low fever hardly ever left me even for a day. As I became too weak to visit the villages, I devoted what strength I had to the revision and typewriting of a Bible History which Lomai and I had translated. Then my right

hand became disabled, and I had to plod on slowly with my left. But at last my left hand became disabled also, and then Mrs Paton did the typewriting for me while I dictated. At last I became too ill even to dictate. The low fever affected my liver, and I became so weak that we all thought the end was near. The elders and teachers gathered round my bed and prayed, while a good many people waited outside. At midnight, Mrs Paton sent a party to White Sands for Mr Macmillan, but I did not then expect to live to see him. While the teachers prayed, Mrs Paton did all that loving skill could do to keep me from sinking, and it was to her under God that I owed my life. Again and again I felt myself going, again and again she seemed to draw me back. At last, towards morning, the terrible weakness passed away, and I gradually got relief from the pain. That evening Mr Macmillan arrived, and very kindly stayed with us a couple of days. It was a great relief to my wife to share the responsibility of treatment. Twice, during the illness that followed, Mr Macmillan came over and did all in his power to help us.

Mr Worthington very kindly offered to go a long and perilous boat journey to Vila to get the *Ysobel* to call on her way to Sydney, and Lomai volunteered to find a crew. But I refused

to allow them to undertake such a serious risk on my account. Nevertheless, we were deeply touched by such kindness.

Then the steamer called on her way north, and we had the joy of welcoming my brother and his bride, but they were only on shore an hour or two. Our new hymn book also arrived, and we were delighted with it. By return I was able to send up the £19, 10s. which the natives raised to pay for it. The natives pay for all their books; and the proceeds, aided by the monthly collections, go towards the printing fund.

The preparation for our Christmas gathering now began in earnest. Our boats plied back and forward in all directions, bringing in people from the out-stations, while many others came overland. The teachers held special services every day, and along with the elders examined those who wished to be baptized. Those whom they recommended came in to me and I examined them further. I was delighted with the progress the Candidates had made, and decided to baptize forty-five of them. Many of these were converts from the out-stations, who had been trained by our teachers there. Mala, Kawa and Tapanua all had converts to be baptized; and some of these volunteered to be trained as teachers. It was a glad and happy time.

On the Sabbath a great crowd gathered on the

Mission Station. I managed to get up for the first time for a month, and the teachers came to carry me over to Church, but I was able to walk across though very weak and feeble. By patient packing, Tausi and Titonga got 342 people into Church, and 42 more stood round the windows. In addition to the Tannese, there were two boatloads of Aniwans who had come over for Christmas. It was a most gladdening service. I baptized 45 adults and 7 children. Lomai and Iavis carried round the elements, with a quiet dignity that showed how deeply they felt what they were doing. Our Communion Roll now recorded 129 in full standing and 1 under suspension. Besides these 9 of our members had died. Our Worshippers had risen to over 500.

This was a day to be remembered on all Tanna; for at Weasisi Mr Macmillan was also baptizing converts, and Mr Gillies was doing the same at his Station, all on the one day and each unknown to the other.

At daylight on Monday, the people began their preparations for the great Christmas feast on Tuesday. All day long, pigs were squealing in every direction. Men and women staggered under great loads of food. Huge ovens were dug out and heated, to bake puddings so large that four men could hardly carry one.

On Christmas morning we gathered in the

Church and held a great thanksgiving service. Then the people went to the level ground behind the Station, where 600 Heathen had already taken up their stand. There were over a thousand people present at the games which followed. Mrs Paton and the teachers made and carried out all the arrangements, as I was too weak to do more than sit for a while in an easy chair and look on from under a tree. The people entered into everything with zest, and all went off well. At one time, two hostile tribes met face to face in the middle of the ground. Neither expected the other to be present. There was an ominous pause, while the two tribes glared at each other and gripped their loaded muskets hard. But our people quickly mixed up amongst them, and welcomed them to our gathering of *peace*. Out of respect to the Worshippers no firing took place, and the two tribes forgot their quarrel for a time and looked on from opposite sides. Unfortunately one of them was leaning on his gun with his toe on the trigger guard, when his toe slipped and set his gun off. The other side thought there was treachery, and instantly every man levelled his gun; but Lomai and the teachers ran out into the middle and called out that it was an accident. The culprit's burned face bore out their statement, and the incident ended in great roars of laughter.

At mid-day the feasting began, and the natives

did justice to the enormous heap of puddings, pigs, biscuits, rice, bread, scones, tea and cocoanuts. They were all gloriously happy.

The most pleasing incident of the whole day was the decision of a Heathen tribe to take the Worship. Lomai said to them—

“But you have often told us that you were going to take the Worship, how can we tell that you really mean it this time? Why not take it right away to-day?”

They said that they really did mean it this time, and in proof they handed over one of their young lads to be kept at Lenakel that he might be taught daily. The boy put on clothes, and the tribe went home promising to come to Church next Sabbath. They were true to their promise, and there was great joy at Lenakel.

On the morning of New Year's Day we had a very solemn service in the Church, when Lomai, Iavis, Nilua and Neropo were set apart as full teachers of the Word of God. Lomai and Iavis were appointed to labour at the head station, so that they could help in the general oversight of the whole work. Nilua was appointed to Lapuna, and Neropo to Leniakis, both very important Heathen centres, and each about three miles from Lenakel. It was an impressive hour, and our people were full of faith and power. Tausi led in prayer, and this is how he prayed :—

“ Lord God our Heavenly Father, this is the New Day to-day. The yams, the trees, the whole earth is full of joy to-day, and we Thy children are full of joy to-day because of Thy love. Fill us with Thy Holy Spirit, and make us like Thy Son. We are glad to-day because of these Thy servants, who have given their lives to teach Thy Word. Fill them with Thy Holy Spirit, and make them strong for the work which Thou hast put into their hearts to do. Go Thou before them, and turn the people’s hearts to them, that the people may take Thy word and find life in Thee. It is not in ourselves we trust, for we are sinful men, O Lord. But our trust is in Thy Son, who came to earth and died for us. We ask Thee to hear our prayer to-day in the Name of Jesus the Messiah. Amen.”

After the service we had a meeting of teachers for special prayer. Then the whole people went to Lapuna, and committed Nilua to God as the teacher of that district. The next day they went to Leniakis and settled Neropo and Sarah. It was a sorrow to me that I could not go with them, but our people were full of enthusiasm. It was a time of much prayer for us all.

A letter now reached me from Mala, to say that the Heathen had decided to attack the Worshippers and burn the Church at Lokavit. He asked what he was to do if they carried out their

threat. I at once sent for the elders and teachers, and after prayer it was decided that Lomai should lead one party to visit the Heathen, while Iavis led another party to Lokavit where both parties were to meet. Next morning they set out with a large following, and towards evening they returned dead beat but full of joy. Their mission had been a complete success. The whole trouble had arisen through a misunderstanding on the part of the Heathen, who suspected old Noka of dealing in "netik." They promised not to attack Lokavit, if Noka would leave the village and go to Lenakel. This Noka agreed to do, and Iavis and Lomai brought him back with them. This quite satisfied the Heathen, who believed that Noka could make no "netik" among the Worshippers at Lenakel, and peace was proclaimed amid great rejoicings.

It now became evident to us all, that I must go to the Colonies for change and medical advice. It was hard to leave the work, but there was no help for it. On the Monday evening we gave final instructions to Tausi, Titonga, Lomai and Iavis, whom we left in charge of the whole work. Mr Macmillan had kindly agreed to exercise a general supervision during our absence. We also arranged for a great farewell meeting on the Wednesday, and the teachers went out evangelizing on Tuesday instead of Thursday. But to our

sorrow the steamer came two days early, and all our teachers and most of our Worshippers were away in the hills. Tausi and Neropo saw the steamer, and ran three miles to be in time! Wiau and Wahu cried bitterly, and at the last moment Tausi burst into tears and sobbed like a child. It was hard to go.

Our fellow-passengers were Mr and Mrs Smaill, who were going to the Colonies to save the life of their child, and Mr and Mrs M'Kenzie and others. During the voyage we had frequent meetings of the Synod's Public Questions Committee, as several of us were on board, to deal with the grave crisis which had arisen in the islands through the aggressions of the French settlers. We drew up a careful statement of the whole facts, and, on arriving at Sydney, we laid this statement before the Hon. Edmund Barton, Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Australia, who kindly granted us a long interview. Mr Barton laid our statements before the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and, after discussing the matter with his colleagues, sent a further communication to Mr Chamberlain upon the subject. After that we interviewed many of the leading men of Australia and New Zealand, and all were of one mind—that France must not be allowed to annex the New Hebrides. Never was the feeling of Australia so strongly expressed on this question, not only by

the leading statesmen, but also by the Press from end to end of the Commonwealth.

But our real hope is not in men and princes, but in God. He rules ; and we believe that He will deliver these helpless and oppressed people from the cruel greed of man.

CHAPTER XXVI

LETTERS FROM THE NATIVES

(*March 1901*)

DURING our absence the faithful teachers at Lenakel sent us full news about the work. They reported steady progress among the Worshippers, but fierce fighting among the Heathen. The former threatened to attack the latter, and burn the Church and Mission-house at Lenakel. The answer of the Worshippers was, "Very well, come and try it." But the Heathen thought better of it.

The following letters are literally translated, and give an interesting glimpse into the native mind. They also show how faithfully our teachers attended to the smallest details of their work, despite the raging of the Heathen around them.

Letter from Lomai.

I, Lomai, give you news of the Worship that is in Tanna in these days, that the talk of fighting is very great. Iavis and I went to the land of Iru

to forbid it, but it went on ; and to the land of the Neriakene, and to the land of the Neviliagene, but they did not give heed ; and to the land of the Nouramene, and to Imal, but their hearts are hard even to death by the musket. One day we sent word to Kota that he should cease fighting against Kaukare, but he would not give heed ; he went and fired at two people, but the bullets did not take their bodies.

All these things are hard for us, but we hope in God, and our prayers are many in Him. We, the Church members and teachers, hear the Word of Jesus, in the book which Mark wrote, that this thing goes not out but by prayer. For two weeks we went about forbidding all this talk, but they gave no heed to our word. It is hard to make them heed our word, but they shall give heed to the Spirit of God.

I want to tell all these things to you and Mrs Paton. And it is not that we men are strong to make the hearts of men soft, but God is strong to do all things that are hard for us men. This is my news to you and Mrs Paton. It is good that you tell my friend Johannes Heyer, and that you all pray to Jesus to help us all and Tausi and Titonga and Iavis and the Church members at Lenakel. This is my news to you and Mrs Paton and Johannes Heyer.

All the Church members are strong, and Wiau

and Wahu are behaving well in these days. And John is strong and Naupum, they are both strong. One old woman whom you know, named Nam Asul, died at Lapuna on Monday, 18th February.

We have taken your book and are reading it. Titonga reads it on all Fridays, and we all rejoice in all the things that are in the book, which it tells to us. Farewell to you and Mrs Paton. This is my love to you both. My hope is in God for you both that you will come again to Lenakel, and that we shall all be glad together.

I want to hear news of my brother, Mr Hume, if he is well or not. I pray much to Jesus that He will give strength to him. You, Mr Hume, said you would give me a likeness which you took of me at Lomanipe, and you promised one to me some day.

In the fighting in the Land of the Nelpai, many people fought against Kauraka and Lohman. They two were alone and they fled, they and the women to a place where there was no food. They were driven there, and they two took to their muskets and stood at two roads and watched. And their women blocked another road and watched. Their pain was very great, and their sorrow and their hunger for very many days.

I LOMAI. *Amen.*

Letter from Tausi.

LENAHEL, TANNA, *Feb. 20, Wednesday.*

I tell you about the wind which smote us on Saturday. We made ready the House of Worship on Friday, and when the House of Worship was strong we took the *Pioneer* and Naitikam inland. All the fences fell. Your house stood fast and all the houses, only the house of the nannies fell, it alone. When the wind became calm we made again the fences, and we made the station good also. All things are good.

We also made lime for the workshop, and we have nearly finished plastering it. We have also prepared the site for the house of Lomai and the house of Iavis, but we have not yet cut the wood for them. When yours is finished we shall put on the frame. All things are well. The horses and the sheep are strong and well. Not one of them is bad.

The wind destroyed the food, the breadfruits and the chestnuts. It did not destroy all the yams, the wind took away some, but some was left. But its time is not finished yet, it has not yet come. Had we been on the sea we should have died, but we were on the land. We eat only cocoanuts every day, and we drink tea, we also eat biscuits and rice. In this I tell you that the people have no food and they bring cocoanuts to

buy it. For two bunches I give four small cups of rice, and for five bunches I give also five cups of rice. And I am afraid that you did not tell me to do this, but they have done this thing. It is good that you tell me your mind about this. I think not to do it, but just now the food is very little, and I am giving thus. There are three casks of biscuits left and one is finished. Half a cask of rice and one bag are left. In a little while there will be no food.

I took the boat and went to Loanbaket, and the people of Lokavit brought many bananas there and the boat was filled. I took the names of the people, and when we came home I paid them in dresses and shirts and lavalavas and handkerchiefs. And some of our people from Ikunala and Leatan also brought sweet potatoes and I bought them also, and the lavalavas were finished, only a few remain. I would like you to send me a piece of white calico-sheet and another calico. If our food were much I would not say it, but our food is little just now. The shirts are also finished, and I would like some more. Some long dresses are left and some handkerchiefs are left.

The steamer went to Aniwa but did not anchor. The Aniwans took the boat and went out, but the steamer did not wait, it came to Tanna and they returned. The wind was good and Tatowa

and Kalei and Saloki took Romana and her children and brought them to Weasisi, and they brought them over the land by Towar Ribor and came to Lenakel. We rejoiced greatly because Jesus led them in much strength. They returned and went back to Weasisi. All the people of Aniwa are strong and well. The Worship is strong again on Aniwa now. They had a great talk and made all things straight. The people of the north gave Seirimu and Mahau to the people of the south. Jesus helped them and there was no anger over it. My greeting to you.

I TAUSI.

Letter from Titonga.

I, Titonga, write to you, Mr Paton and Mrs Paton. That day you went away you appointed us to all things at Lenakel, that we should stay and look after them and make all things good.

The nannies are all strong. Only the dogs bit one nannie and broke its tail, but it is well again. Another one had a sore eye. I asked whether anyone had struck it, but no one said it, and I do not know what caused it. And they are all well. I also tell you that one of the sheep has given birth to a little one. Iaruel and Nakabua look after the water every day, they are not lazy but they are strong. I also tell you that

the English fowls are strong, but the dogs did eat two and then they did stop. I also tell of the horses that they are all strong.

I also tell of the women that they are strong to look well after the Station every day. They also sew the clothes on all Wednesdays. I also tell that the deacons read that book in these days. I also tell of the school that every day the Church members and the people of the Candidates' class gather together and read the Word. Some know it and some do not know it.

Letter from Mrs Paton's House-girls.

We two, Wahu and Wiau, write this letter to you, Mrs Paton, to tell you that we two are living in the house of Iau and Iesua, and that we are awaiting you, we two and Nabupo. We have been working on the Station every Friday in every week, we two and Wiko and Nabupo. We two also do your bedroom on all Wednesdays, and the room in which food is eaten on all Saturdays. Nabupo also does her work in the kitchen on all Saturdays. We two take out the biscuits and the sugar every day, and we help the wives of the deacons in cleaning your Station and the paths, and in teaching in the House of Worship, and on the day for going forth on all Thursdays.

This is our love and our gladness to you. We

two pray to Jesus to help you and give strength to you, that one day He may bring you back here in great strength.

We two are teaching the women to sew dresses. We have cut up all the pieces which you left, they are finished. The women are bringing their own and sewing them. There is very great fighting in these days and we are afraid, but you pray much for us to Jesus that He will help us in every trouble in this land. We also are praying to Jesus to help you in doing all things across the sea.

We two also speak our love to Johannes Heyer, saying that we are doing Mrs Paton's work, and looking after all her things which she appointed to us two.

We bought two pieces of calico, and we sewed two dresses, one for me, Wiau, and one for Wahu very good. This is the love of us two to you. May Jesus help you! Farewell, Mrs Paton and Mr Paton.

We two, WAHU,
WIAU.

I, Tausi, helped these two to write this letter.
AMEN.



THE CHURCH ON ANIWA

CHAPTER XXVII

BACK TO TANNA ONCE MORE

(June 1901)

WE sailed from Sydney on the 1st of June, steaming slowly past the *Ophir* and her splendid escort of war ships. A pleasant run of ten days brought us to Port Resolution, Tanna, where we went ashore while the *Mambare* steamed north to collect the Missionaries for Synod. She was to be back on the 19th, but it was the 1st of July before we heard the welcome steamer cry again. Day after day we eagerly scanned the horizon through our glasses, and day by day the certainty grew that some serious accident had happened. We were quite helpless, and all that we could do was to wait patiently and commit our anxiety to our God.

Meanwhile, we were not idle. Natives gathered from all parts of Tanna, including our beloved leaders from Lenakel, and we had many meetings culminating in a Communion service. It was one of Tanna's gladdest and holiest days when ninety-one natives sat down with us around the Lord's Table.

One night we were aroused at midnight. A boat had just arrived from Aniwa, with a man whose hand had been shattered by dynamite. We ran down to the landing and found that he was just dying. It was Tatowa, one of our strongest teachers on Aniwa. We carried him up to the house, and did what we could to revive him, but he was beyond all human aid. He had lost so much blood, and had suffered so much from exposure on a rough sea, that he died soon after he reached us. It was a great loss to Aniwa, and our hearts went out to the poor widow and her two little children. This sad event cast a great gloom upon our gathering.

At last the steamer came. She had broken down, and gone to Noumea for repairs. All was now bustle and excitement. Long sittings, much writing, little sleep, and happy fellowship filled the four days of Synod's meetings. The welcoming of new workers, and the reports of Stations, were the two most interesting items of business. Among the former we had the joy of welcoming Mr Kenneth M'Kenzie to be our fellow-worker at Lenakel.

All too soon, the Synod came to an end. Almost before we realized we had met, we were bidding each other farewell. In a few hours we reached Lenakel. Lomai and Iavis came off in the *Pioneer*, and a few minutes later the *Mambare*

was steaming north, while we pulled for the shore. On the landing, a great crowd of natives were waiting to welcome us. It was a gladsome sight to see so many clothed bodies and happy faces. In the background there was an armed band of naked savages. It was good to be among our own people again, and our hearts rose in thankfulness to God, who had in His mercy brought us back. Some faces were missing, and among them, that of little John, Lomai's son, and we shall never see them here again. But there were new faces among the Worshippers, and for these we thanked God.

The elders and teachers gave a most encouraging report. Only a few shallow ones had gone back, while there had been decided gains from Heathenism. The Candidates' class had grown, and the day school had been fully maintained. Iavis and Lomai had built splendid houses next to those of Tausi and Titonga, and their little compound was an example to all the others for neatness and cleanliness. Everything about the Station was in good order, and Mrs Paton's house-girls were found faithful in all that had been entrusted to their care. It was a joyous home-coming, and all our hope and prayer was that God would grant our heart's desire and enable us to spend our lives on Tanna.

The work of shifting our house to the brow of the

hill was at once undertaken under Mr M'Kenzie's skilled direction, in the hope that a higher and breezier site might free us from the constant fever. Scores of men and women helped us in clearing, digging, fencing, and carrying. The clatter of tongues never ceased from early morning till late at night, and every nook and cranny of the Station was seized upon as sleeping quarters by people from a distance. All these workers were paid in clothes, and despite some fine Mission boxes from London and Victoria, it took Mrs Paton and her girls sewing late and early to keep within sight of the demand.

On the 18th July, Neropo finished his new Church at Leniakis, and we all gathered there for an opening service. The Church stands on the site of the old kava house. We had many impressive addresses, and those of Lomai and Neropo were among the best. Lomai urged the people of Leniakis not to do to Neropo what the people of Nazareth did to Jesus, and reject his teaching because he came back to his own people. He said—

“Neropo was the same as you, but he is not now. He has got a new thing in his heart, which you have not got. He has got the living Word of the living God, and he comes to you as the messenger of Christ. Say not, He is only one of ourselves why should we listen to him?

But say, He is God's teacher, come to tell us God's Word. Obey his teaching, and you will find life eternal through Jesus."

Neropo said, "Long ago I lived in the old fashion, and my heart was full of badness. Then I went to Queensland and heard the Word of Jesus. I came back and tried to worship God, but the old fashion was too strong for me, and I went back into darkness. Then Jesus called me, and I heard Him say, Go to Lenakel and learn to be a teacher. And I left you and went to live at Lenakel. A few months ago, Jesus again called me, and said, Go back and teach your own people my good Word. And I came and built my house, and then I built this Church. And now I stand before you, not because my heart is good, not because I am better than you; but I stand here because I have sinned and am sorry for my sin, and because I trust in Jesus to take away my sin. I have come because Jesus told me to come, and I call upon you to be sorry for your sin, and trust in Jesus to take away your sin and give you life."

At the close of the service, Neropo and his people made a feast to the visitors, and Mrs Paton and I rode home. Lomai came with us to lead my horse, as both my hands were in bandages, my old trouble having come back upon me.

On Saturday, the 27th of July, Lomai and Iavis sailed for Lopilpil, to spend the Sabbath with our people there. They came back on Monday, with mingled news of good and evil. A large crowd had gathered in the Church, and great joy had been manifested by the people. During the service they heard two shots, but thought no more about it. Lomai then led a party to evangelise to the north, while Iavis remained to speak further with the local people. At the close of a second service, a young woman went to the village on the top of the cliff, where she had left her old mother who was too feeble to descend to the Church. To her unspeakable horror she found the old woman lying dead with a bullet-hole through her body! The shots were now explained. Not content with shooting her, the murderer had mutilated the body with an axe, and then rolled it in the ashes of the fire at which the poor old woman had been warming herself. It was a sad ending to a happy day.

To this day the murder remains a mystery. The inland Heathen disclaimed all connection with it, but suspicion fell on Ietab, one of the wildest of the mountain savages and a man of blood. The only effect upon the Worshippers was to quicken their zeal and earnestness.

Lomai brought back with him a poor little fellow called Ihiwa, who had lost both his feet.

The trouble began with native sores, and the feet gradually rotted away, till only the stumps of his legs were left close to his knees. I had heard about him months before, and sent up one of the teachers to bring him up to Lenakel for treatment. But the little fellow was afraid, and crept away in the night and hid himself. So the teacher had to come back without him. This time Lomai found him, and asked him to come to Lenakel. Ihiwa gave one long look into Lomai's great loving face, and then all his fears fled away! He could trust Lomai to go anywhere with him. And I do not wonder that he trusted Lomai, for to see him is to love him. So Lomai brought Ihiwa to Lenakel, and gently carried him up to the Mission house. As my hands were still bad, I showed Lomai how to cleanse and bandage the sores, and he did so every day. The sores were in a frightful state, but the regular dressing worked wonders, and soon one leg was quite healed, while the other was rapidly improving. The little fellow crept about on his hands and knees, and was as happy as the day was long. He was not used to such kindness, and he used to look up at us with great wondering eyes. After a time he decided to give his heart to Jesus, and he is now a member of the Candidates' class.

At our Communion season in August five couples offered themselves to be trained as

teachers. The work of training teachers has been a great joy to us, and even while in training these men and women do untold good in winning their fellows.

One day, a Heathen elopement very nearly ended in bloodshed. A young Heathen in Neropo's tribe ran off with a woman belonging to another tribe, whose husband was in Queensland. Neropo, not knowing what had happened, went to the woman's village to hold a service. Her father wanted to shoot him, but when Neropo heard the reason, he challenged the man to lay any evil conduct at his door. He said to the enraged father—

“What mark has the man who ran away with your daughter? He has the same mark that you have—the mark of Heathenism. What mark have I? The mark of the Worship. Can you lay any such conduct as this upon one who bears the mark of the Worship?”

The man confessed that he could not. Then he jumped up and said—

“I was angry. I have just come from attacking your wife. But you have spoken truly, and my anger is gone. Let us worship together.” And they held a service. Neropo afterwards learned that before he went to the village the father had met Sarah on the track and rushed at her with a stick, but she fled and escaped.

The runaway couple were now found, and the

young scoundrel tried to shoot his brother's wife for scolding him. But the woman became afraid, and ran home. On getting to her village she seized a gun and tried to shoot herself, but her father snatched it out of her hands. Then his anger blazed up afresh, and he fired at her. Fortunately he missed her and she escaped into the bush.

Another Heathen affair ended more sadly. A man proposed to marry a widow, but she refused him on the ground that he had already several wives. His answer was a bullet, and she fell dead. So little does a Heathen value human life!

On September the 16th, we began the great work of pulling down the house. The ceiling, walls and flooring were cut into large sections, and each section was taken down by itself. It was a work of no little danger, but Mr M'Kenzie's skilful appliances averted any serious accident. We had our narrow escapes, however, as once when a whole partition came crashing down without the slightest warning, and we just managed to get away from under it in time. Another day a heavy verandah beam in being taken down fell right on top of my head, and the very same beam in being put up some days after fell on Mr M'Kenzie, bruising his face and arm.

During the actual removal, we had the school and teachers' classes in the evening, so as to have

all the daylight for working. The excitement among the natives was great. As each section was taken down a great crowd of men, women and children got around it, and with tremendous yelling, tugging and straining, carried it up the hill to the new site. While we were building, Mrs Paton and her girls were sewing from morning to night to make garments to pay the workers. By the 5th of October, we had half the house up and moved into it. Not long after the rest of the house was removed, and we found the new site well worth the toil of removing. Mr M'Kenzie's large experience, and the willing way the natives rallied round us, greatly lessened the labour.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE HORRORS OF WAR

ONE morning, as we were building, the news came that a woman had been shot four miles inland. Iavis and the teachers went up to inquire into it, and to try to prevent further bloodshed. It was a sad tale that they brought back. A man called Iakabas had a quarrel against a man in that village. He went to his house in the dead of night to shoot him, but could not see him. He was turning away disappointed, when he saw someone sleeping outside under a red blanket. Hoping that it might be his enemy, he fired at close range and then bolted. It was not his enemy, but a mother and her babe. The bullet entered her left side just below the waist, passed out again below the thigh, and then ploughed right through the bone of her right leg just above the ankle. The baby was unhurt. The village was aroused by the woman's shrieks of pain, and an old man fired along the track, but Iakabas was safe in the bush by that time.

On hearing that the woman was still alive, I got guides, as it is a new village, and hurried up

first thing in the morning to see if I could do anything. When we got to the village, an armed band came stealing out upon us with their guns full cocked and pointing at us. I did not like the look of things, but I walked right up to the ringleader and held out my hand to him. He grounded his gun, and shook hands sullenly. It happened to be the woman's husband. I told them how sorry I was, and that I had brought medicine for the wounded woman. The men then turned round and silently walked back to the village, and the rest of us followed them. I found the poor woman in great agony, but I cleansed and dressed the wounds as well as I could. She seemed to be greatly relieved, and was very grateful. The men also began to thaw, and gradually became very friendly. They had mistaken us for the enemy, and had got a fright, but they now did all they could to make up for their stiff reception.

The woman gradually recovered under treatment, though she may never be able to walk. One day an old Sacred man in the village said to me—

“You said you thought the woman would live ; I said she would die. You are a Sacred man.”

I told him that such things were in the power of God alone, and that He had made this woman better. The whole thing made a deep impression on a thoroughly Heathen village.

Another day, I was visiting the sick on the Station at dusk when I came upon an excited group of people. "Iawak has been shot!" was the cry that greeted me. "Is he killed?" was my first question, and the answer was, "No; he is still alive." Iawak was a great Heathen Chief in Neropo's district. So I seized a horse and sent the natives for the other. Mr M'Kenzie saddled up, while I got some medical supplies, and then we rode up to see Iawak. We reached the village after dark. Black figures flitted here and there, on the watch with loaded guns. In a dark house we found Iawak lying surrounded by his wives, and with Neropo attending to his wants. He was shot through the groin, but we cleansed and dressed the wound, and he seemed much easier. After some talk and prayer we set off home again.

Just after we left Iawak we halted to light some torches. Suddenly I heard angry exclamations, and looking round I could just dimly see Noukout with his gun levelled at his wife, who was clinging to another native. In a moment I swung my horse round so as to come between them. Mr M'Kenzie did the same, and between us we were able to prevent Noukout from getting a shot at his wife. What made it so unutterably sad was that both Noukout and his wife were Church members. As soon as we got Noukout

edged round to the back, still with levelled gun and pleading with us to get out of his way and let him shoot his wife, I told Noaniamok to go on quietly along the homeward track, while we followed between her husband and herself. We soon reached the village, and then we had a long talk. Noukout was at first defiant, and threatened to kill the first one that spoke to him, but by patient pleading and prayer we got him calmed. He then became penitent and humble. Noukout is a raging maniac when roused, but at other times he is as meek as a lamb. His nerves were upset over the shooting of Iawak, who was his brother-in-law. Of course this was no excuse for his terrible conduct, and I suspended him from Church membership. I had to do so once before, when he gave Noaniamok a severe thrashing in a fit of temper. I have seldom been as sick at heart as I was that night as we rode back to Lenakel.

Next day I rode up again to see Iawak. His people were standing in two rows facing each other, and Iawak was lying in their arms. Thus he had lain all night, and thus he lay all that day. I found him much better, and he told me how he had been shot. His own people across the gully had invited him to their village for a talk. He suspected nothing, and went unarmed, but his son took the precaution to take his Win-

chester and a good supply of cartridges. As soon as Iawak began to speak a man fired at him, and the bullet passed through his groin. Iawak fell, but his son blazed away at the traitors, while his father wriggled away into the bush. The bullets ploughed up the ground around Iawak as he dragged himself along, and one cut a great gash across his shoulder, while another grazed the son's eyebrows, and a third made a flesh wound in the father's arm. At last they got away from the village, and the men were afraid to follow because of the son's Winchester.

I tried to persuade Iawak to come right down to Lenakel and "take the Worship," as he said he was done for ever with Heathenism, but for some reason he kept in the bush. They were afraid to stay in the village, so they carried him about from place to place in the scrub. The enemy hunted for him daily, and hence they could not remain long in one spot. Neropo kept me in touch with his hiding-place, and his wound rapidly began to heal.

The enemy, baffled at first in tracing him, took some of his blood from the ground where he fell to make "netik" and kill him by that means. Iawak on hearing of this ordered his wives to kill a dog and wrap it up like a man, and bury it with great lamentation in his old village. The wives did so, and wailed all night. The enemy

made sure that Iawak was dead, and rejoiced accordingly. His idea seems to have been to get them to throw away the blood as no longer necessary, and so baffle them in their "netik"-making. It was a clever ruse.

For a time it looked as if Iawak would recover. But the constant shifting and the fear of being deserted and killed so worked on his nerves that sleep left him, and he suddenly collapsed. When last I saw him he was lying in a rough shelter in the midst of dense reeds, surrounded by his wives, and very carelessly guarded by several men. I pointed out to Neropo how easy it would be for the enemy to steal upon them and shoot them, owing to the total lack of any system in their guard. The same day Iawak died, and Neropo buried him.

The war would now have been brought to a close but for Jimmie's treachery in firing upon the enemy as they came to a conference. The enemy then vowed that they would fight against Jimmie, till he either fled to a distant part of Tanna or joined the Worship at Lenakel. Many tribes now became involved, and life after life was lost owing to Jimmie's villainy.

One Sabbath evening, as Neropo was leaving Jimmie's village after conducting a service, he caught sight of the enemy lurking in the bush. His first thought was to call out, and then he

remembered that he was taking some women and children to the coast for safety. So he went on until a turn in the path hid him from the enemy, and then he sent back an old woman by a different road to warn the village. She was in time, but one man, disregarding the advice of the others, raised his head to take a look round. The next moment he fell forward shot through the head. Neropo having taken the women to a place of safety, now ran back and found the man lying dead.

A few days later, a man on the other side was shot while heavy with kava. Next day his brother was killed. And so the dreadful war went on. From our verandah we could see the smoke of burning villages, and hear the shots that were dealing death and sorrow. It was unspeakably sad to see this slaughter and destruction going on right under our eyes, and to know that British bullets and British guns were doing the deadly work!

One morning, as we were building, a labour schooner hove in sight. When she came abreast of the landing her boat came ashore with a sad freight. The recruiter had died that morning—it was supposed from drinking carbolic in mistake for rum—and the Government agent brought his body ashore for burial. The sailors carried his body up to the Church, and we buried him in our little churchyard. It was a sad funeral.

The same schooner landed a Tanna man, called Naias. He had learned many things in Queensland, but he had not learned to know Jesus. Lomai and others urged him to remain at Lenakel, and learn the Worship. And he agreed; but, alas, for his new-formed resolution! The Heathen came down in crowds and besought him to go back to them. Naias could not resist their pleadings, and he went back into Heathen darkness, and to our sorrow we saw him no more.

Not long after Iawak died, Noaniamok and some women were sitting chatting round a fire in a little clearing in the reeds. We could see the tree, under which they sat, from our dining-room door. Suddenly three musket shots rang out from the reeds, just behind them. Noaniamok fell forward dead; a second woman threw her child from her with a shriek, and then she also fell dead; while the third sprang to her feet with a great gash across her back. A puff of smoke among the reeds showed where the murderers lay hid, and a man who was sitting near fired at the spot. His chance bullet dealt death to one of the murderers. Down in the valley, the Worshippers were just coming out of Church, all unconscious of the tragedy that was being enacted on the hill above them.

This was only one among many such horrors. But the Worshippers never ceased to plead with both sides; and at last a Chief and two important

men among the enemy came right out of the thick of it and joined the Worship. And then, to our unspeakable joy, peace was proclaimed, and the cruel war was at an end. It was another great triumph for the Worship, and it left Heathenism weaker than ever on West Tanna.

CHAPTER XXIX

MEMORABLE SCENES

AN epidemic of influenza swept over West Tanna, about this time. It was followed by whooping-cough. Many of our people died, and still more of the Heathen. Poor Lomai was very ill too, but as soon as he could manage to crawl about with a stick he came to me and said—

“Misi, can you not give me some work that will equal my strength? There is so much to do, and I have been ill so long, that my heart is sore because I cannot help you. Is there nothing that my weakness will equal?”

Dear Lomai! I sent him back to bed, and told him that that was the work appointed him for the present, and I believe that it was the hardest task ever set to Lomai. Another day I found him decidedly worse, and I asked him if he had done anything to bring on a relapse. He looked a bit shamefaced and then said—

“Yes, I was reading in St John last night, and my heart was so glad with what I read that I went out into the village and told the people about what I had read. Then I was cold, and all the pain came back very bad.”



MRS FRANK PATON AND HER SEWING CLASS ON ANIWA



When Lomai got well again his face just beamed all day long, and he was always to be seen wherever the work was heaviest.

Lomai and Iavis now purchased, on behalf of the Church, about five acres of ground for various purposes. Part of it we set aside as a burial ground. Our new cemetery was not many days old when a row of coral graves bore silent witness to the steady work of death. Among the victims were Nausian, our brave teacher at Imwanelhiaune, and little David, Iesua's son, the brightest child on all the Station. Nausian has already been honourably mentioned in this narrative. He did noble service at one of the most difficult posts on West Tanna, and his work lives after him. He was an heroic man of faith, and his death was an untold loss to our work. But God has the work at heart, and He is all-wise, and we comforted ourselves with this thought.

After Nausian's death, I gathered our teachers for prayer as to his successor. One name was laid upon our hearts, and that was Kahwa, who had already done good service at Kwamera. I asked him if he was willing, and he at once agreed to go. I was too ill to go myself, but a great company of our Worshippers went up to Imwanelhiaune, and settled Kahwa and his wife among the people there. Kahwa is also a man of faith, and he fears not the face of man. God

help them at their lonely post, and grant them the supreme joy of winning the Heathen for Christ !

Nausian's widow, Kaupa, was a member of the Candidates' class, though a weak one. Nausian's half-brother Tavo now claimed her as his lawful wife, and she undoubtedly was according to the Heathen law. I spoke and prayed with her, and she braced herself up to refuse him. I also spoke some straight words to that young scoundrel, and he picked up his gun in a rage and stalked out of the Station. A few nights after, Tavo came back with an armed band to the village where Kaupa was living, just outside the Mission fence. He demanded that she should be given up, and threatened to shoot Iauiko if he refused. Mr M'Kenzie and I ran down to the village, followed by the whole Station. Lomai was already on the spot, doing some plain speaking to Tavo. It was a sad business. In the foreground stood Tavo, clutching his loaded musket ; around him were grouped a band of naked savages, armed and ready for any emergency ; while in the background, dark figures flitted to and fro. We talked and reasoned and pled with the Heathen, and told them that Kaupa would not move a foot except of her own free will. We were standing, a thick body of men, between Kaupa and the guns of the Heathen ; but, to our unutterable sorrow she gave

way, and decided to go with Tavo. We solemnly pointed out the consequences of such a step, but she had made up her mind, and away she went back into the darkness of Heathenism, taking her little daughter with her. I felt years older, as I sorrowfully made my way back to the house that night.

We now began to prepare for our great Christmas gathering. Our people had invited all the Worshippers in Tanna, to meet for a week of fellowship and prayer at Lenakel. The Worshippers of East and North Tanna accepted our invitation, but those on South Tanna were not able to come. As the time drew near, our boats plied back and forward in all directions, bringing people and provisions. Soon every house and shanty on the place was crowded with visitors. Even pigs were turned out of their shelters, to make room for their betters. The steamer brought Mrs Macmillan and her child, and took away Mr M'Kenzie, who went north to build a Church at Santo. A few days later, Mr Macmillan and his people walked overland from Weasisi, and our boat-load arrived from Aniwa the same day. It was a great joy to have our fellow-workers with us, and it only needed Mr Watt's presence to make our gathering complete, but unfortunately he was away from Tanna.

It was the greatest gathering of Worshippers

ever held in Tanna. The Church was far too small to hold the people, so we met under the ample shade of a far-spreading banyan tree. There were men of different tribes and different tongues, many of them bitter enemies only a few years back, who addressed earnest words to each other as brothers in Christ. It was a time of much prayer and real blessing to us all.

Christmas Day began with a great gathering under our banyan tree, and then the Heathen gathered from all directions. First came the women carrying baskets to bear away their share of the feast ; then came their lordly husbands, too dignified to carry anything but a loaded gun. There would have been many more Heathen present, but for their mutual distrust of one another. A peaceful spirit prevailed throughout the whole day, and the natives thoroughly enjoyed themselves in the usual way. The friendly rivalry between Tannese and Aniwan added to the interest of the games.

On the Friday, we had special services in preparation for the Communion. On the Saturday, we had a baptismal service, when I had the joy of baptising sixteen more of our converts. On the Sabbath, our gathering culminated in a memorable Communion Service. Early in the morning, the Church members assembled on our verandah for an hour of prayer. It touched our

hearts to hear these men pray, each in his own tongue. The very fact of such a gathering made us realise, as never before, the marvellous power of the Gospel of Christ. After ten or eleven short, earnest prayers, we wended our way down to the banyan tree, under which the Lord's Table was spread. In all 166 natives partook with us of the Holy Feast, and a great company of people reverently looked on. Mr Macmillan dispensed the Communion, and Lomai and Iavis carried round the bread and wine. It was the holiest and gladdest day that had ever dawned on West Tanna!

Next day, by sea and land, our guests began to leave for their distant homes. It was a gathering looked forward to with many prayers, and now it was looked back upon with joyous hope. A few more such gatherings, and Heathenism will hide its head on Tanna.

Among those baptised was an old man called Kahl. He was a great "netik" Chief in his Heathen days, but now he was a true and earnest follower of Jesus. He looked so happy that Lomai said to him one day—

"What is in your heart in these days, Kahl?"

And the old man's face lit up as he answered—

"Joy! My heart is full of joy, and my rest is good. In the old days I was baptised by the Devil to do his work, and I had no rest, and my sleep was bad. Now I have been baptised by

Jesus to do His work, and my heart is full of joy, and my rest is good."

On North Tanna, the work was so blest of God that all the coast natives were now Worshippers. From Nalebot an urgent request came for a teacher. As Mr Macmillan had no one ready to go just then, he asked me for Iau. I gave Iau and Iesua a day to think it over, and their answer was a glad consent. A few days later Mr Macmillan rode across, and took Iau and Iesua to Nalebot in the *Pioneer*. I was not well enough to go with them, but the teachers told me what a hearty settlement it was. It was a matter of great thankfulness to us, that another of our own trained teachers had thus willingly left home and friends to labour for Christ, at a distant post and among strangers.

That same morning just at dawn two women arrived at Lenakel from the far south. They had travelled all night through an enemy's country, and were overcome with weariness and sorrow. They came to appeal for help from the Worshippers, for their tribe was in dire distress. One of the two women was the wife of Kaukare, the great fighting Chief. A day or two before, he had led an expedition against his enemies and shot one of them dead. He was returning in high spirits, when he suddenly came face to face with his mortal foe. He was off his guard and had

no time to fire, but received the other's bullet with a laugh. When they saw their leader fall the tribe fled. Another of their number was waylaid and shot, and his body was carried across Tanna to be eaten. The tribe were now living in the bush and were starving. The women stole through the enemy's country, in the night, to beg the Worshippers to go and bring the whole tribe over to Lenakel for safety. All their Heathen friends had deserted them in their extremity.

Lomai came to see me, and suggested that he and Iavis should at once gather a band of volunteers, and bring over the tribe. I heartily approved, and the Worshippers rallied round their elders splendidly. As they passed through, Lomanian the Heathen besought them not to venture on so dangerous an expedition. When they found that the Worshippers were not to be moved from their purpose, they pled with them to wait till they could gather a large force of armed men. Iavis was about to argue the matter out with his tribe, when Lomai stood up and said—

“This is no time for talking. This is a day for action in God's name. Let us go alone.”

The Worshippers then crossed the gullies into the enemy's country. At one point a group of armed Worshippers met them and proposed to go with them.

‘Put away those guns,’ said Lomai.

“We are afraid to go without them,” was the answer.

“Then go back home,” said Lomai, “for we go in God’s name, and not a Worshipper shall take his gun this day.”

The lads returned ashamed and yet afraid, for Lomai spoke with authority.

When they got right into the enemy’s country, Lomai’s watchful eyes detected signs of fear among his followers.

“Stop,” he called out, “I see trembling among you. Let us worship God and He will take away all our fears and lift up our hearts.”

They sang a hymn, and Iavis prayed, and all their fears vanished.

After a long march they came on to the first of the three allied tribes. They were living in a small enclosure, hungry and thirsty, and ready to die with fear and despair, Lomai said to them—

“We have come in God’s name to save you. Come with us at once.” He then left a party to help them to get ready, while he and the rest went on to the second tribe. There also he found the same distress, but their counsels were divided. Some wanted to delay for a day or two, but Lomai said—

“This is your last chance. God has sent you deliverance this day. Come now, and you live; stay, and you die.”

This decided the day, and they went with Lomai. The third tribe gave him more trouble, but Lomai warned them that the roads would be better watched on the morrow and that escape would then be impossible.

At last the homeward march began. The lame, the blind, the aged and the infirm had to be carried along roads that tax the strength of the strong. Lomai had a baby in one arm, and with the other he helped an old woman, who was bent nearly double with age. All were heavy laden. The rescued people were in great terror lest the enemy should come upon them, and when they suddenly heard guns banging in front of them they would have bolted, had not Lomai stayed their panic.

“Don’t be afraid,” he said, “God has sent us to-day and we are safe in His keeping. It is salvation and not death that has come to you this day.” And God caused the enemy to turn back just before they came to the place where Lomai and his party crossed their track.

It was a great deliverance, and so manifestly of God that when Lomai and Iavis arrived at Lapuna weary and worn, the Heathen said to them—

“Our word is finished. We have no other Chiefs now but you two. The Worship has done what we with our guns were weak to do. Your word is true, and there is no strength in us.”

It was dark when they got back, but their hearts were uplifted, and their faith was greatly strengthened. For they had seen God's arm outstretched to save!

The next morning Lomai heard with great indignation that an old woman had been left by her friends to die at one of the villages. Her younger sister had seen her lying among the reeds and said to her—

"My sister, I must go; and I cannot take you with me, for the road is long, and I am in great fear."

And the old woman had answered, "My sister, go. Save yourself, and leave me to die, for I am old." And she left her!

Lomai's wrath was kindled at such a heartless tale, and he said—

"What did you bring on your backs? Sticks and rubbish that will rot away! And yet you left a woman who can never die! Tell me where you have left her, and I will go back for her."

They described the place, and Iavis and Lomai, though dead beat, again set out with a rescue party. They first visited the enemy, however, to tell them what they had done, and to urge them to make peace. The warriors agreed to have a great talk that day, and promised to send word as to the result. Iavis's legs refused to carry him any further, so he spent the rest of the day talk-

ing to the Heathen, while Lomai and Nilua went on to find the woman. After some searching they found her just at the point of death. At first she could not speak, but by bending his ear close to her mouth Lomai just made out the words—

“Water ; I am dying.”

They gave her a cocoanut to drink, and that revived her. Lomai then cut a rude stretcher with one of the axes that had been flung away in the flight of the previous day. They laid her upon it, and by no little toil they brought her to a place of safety, reaching home long after dark.

The next day was spent by both sides in talk. But towards evening Lomai heard with horror that another old woman had been left to die in one of the furthest villages of the tribe. Neither he nor Iavis could walk any more, they were so stiff and sore from their heroic exertions of the past three days. So we called for volunteers, among our young assistant teachers. There was a cheering response, and they set out once more. Next morning they arrived at the village, and found the enemy in possession. The Heathen scowled at the Worshippers, but offered no violence. They had dug up Kaukare's body, and torn the grave mats from it in their savage fury. The teachers reburied the body, and asked the Heathen to let it lie in peace. Then they looked for the

old woman. The house which had been described to them as hers was smashed in, and there was a pool of fresh blood before the door, but they could see nothing of the woman. The Heathen denied all knowledge of her, and our party, having done all that they could, returned to Lenakel. They told me what they had done, and added that "Satan looked out of the eyes of the Heathen." We all thought that the old woman had been murdered, but we learned afterwards that she had crawled into the bush and escaped. We thanked God for the faith and fearlessness of our young teachers, who had shown the same spirit which we had learned to look for in our veteran leaders.

The next day peace was declared, and the war was at an end throughout the entire west of Tanna. It was the work of God through His worshipping people.

The steamer now came, and we were disappointed at finding that my father and mother had been prevented from coming. However, she brought one precious thing for us—the *Bible History*, which Lomai and I had spent so much strength in translating. It was printed at Basel, at the Mission Institute, and was a beautiful book. Print, binding and pictures were excellent, and we felt thankful to our kind German friends for their generous help. Lomai and all the natives were overjoyed to get so large a portion of God's Word

in their own mother tongue, and they willingly paid a shilling for each copy.

All this time, Lomai and I were pressing on with translation work. Both of us were far from well, and nothing but the sense of the supreme importance of the work enabled us to struggle through to the end. I shall never forget seeing Lomai crawling up the hill by the help of a stick, resting every now and then for very weakness, that he might not lose a day at helping me in this great work. By dint of weary work, we managed to complete the translation of Luke, John, Acts, Epistles of John and Revelation, in addition to Matthew and Mark, which were already printed.

This work of translation had a wonderful effect in shaping Lomai's character. From the beginning he was deeply impressed by the Gospel story, and he always tried to understand the true meaning of each word. It was often no easy matter to get any Tanna words to convey the meaning of the original, and one day Lomai said—

“Greek is a very crooked language! It is not like the Tanna tongue, which is so straight and smooth.” Yes, to him! But I am afraid I did not find the Tanna tongue either straight or smooth!

On another occasion, after trying in vain to

turn one of Paul's speeches into intelligible Tannese, I said to Lomai—

“Do you think the people will be able to understand that, Lomai?”

And he answered very dubiously, “I don't know; not many people speak like Paul; he had a very strong mouth!”

Another day we were revising 1 John iii. 18—
“My little children, let us not love in word, neither with the tongue; but in deed and in truth.” Lomai asked me to read it again, and when I did so he said—

“That is the very truth. If all men did that, they would truly worship God.”

But whatever the passage was, Lomai drank it in, and thought over it, and honestly tried to live it out in his daily life. His faith is as simple as a child's, and he loves his Lord with his whole soul. Consequently he loves his fellow-men as few others do, and his life is beautiful with the beauty of Christlike deeds.

CHAPTER XXX

FAREWELL TO TANNA

MY health had now become so bad that we sorrowfully decided to leave Tanna, at least for a time. No greater sorrow could come to us than to leave our beloved work and people, but we knew that God knew this, and that he would not send us away unless for some good purpose. It was a time of sore struggle and much prayer, and though we seemed to be baffled, we knew that it was only our will that was baffled. God's will was working through it all, and we knew that this darkness would some day be full of light—in God's good time.

One of the hardest things to bear was to see the sorrow of our people, when we told them. I was too ill to go to the villages to say good-bye so we arranged for a united farewell service at Lenakel. When the day came, a great congregation filled the Church to overflowing, but to my sorrow I was too ill to be present. But Mrs Paton was there, and I shall quote her description of what took place at the meeting.

“ Before 7 A.M. the bell rang, and the people

gathered to the service. When I arrived the Church was full—about three hundred people. I told Titonga, Lomai and Iavis to address the people, and I gave Lomai messages from Mr Paton which he was to deliver. Titonga took the chair, and I went to the organ. The first hymn was "Safe in the arms of Jesus," which was beautifully sung. Then Titonga prayed for the work, for Mr Paton, and for us all. He also prayed that if Mr Paton's health should prevent him from returning, they might all be kept strong in the Worship, and not go back. After the prayer, he read a passage out of the 24th chapter of Joshua. He implored the people to put away their strange gods, and to worship with all their hearts, so that when their Missionary left them for a time they would not fall away. He told them to choose this day whom they would serve, and if they chose to be Christ's disciples, to do so whole-heartedly, and not to be lukewarm. At the close of the address we sang, "Who is on the Lord's side." How they did open their mouths and sing!

Lomai then rose. He said—

"We all expected to see Mr Paton here to-day, but Mrs Paton tells me. . . ." And then Lomai, the strong, noble-hearted Lomai, who has often bravely faced the Heathen's rage, burst into tears, and for a full minute he could not speak! The whole congregation joined with him. Such a

scene cannot, and need not be described. He began once more—

“Mrs Paton says that in the night our Misi nearly fell asleep in death and left us his body. I cannot say much to you, but I want to read you this verse, ‘Surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows.’ Just so our Misi also suffered for us, and you have not taken his word as you should have. Awake, my brothers, rouse your hearts, and pray to God that we may all be better men and women. Our Misi has struggled; I have seen him in his study go on with the translation of these books, when he could hardly stand. And when the books came, did you value them as you should have? There are many of you who have not yet bought them. It is because you are not strong, or you would have all bought them long ago. Our Misi is ill, he goes away, we may never see him again. My brothers, be strong. My heart is too sore. I cannot say much.”

Poor Lomai, this was all uttered in broken sentences, and accompanied with sobs, the tears rolling fast down his face.

The hymn following was a great contrast to the one before. I only heard two or three feeble voices bravely attempting to sing. Four of our other teachers then prayed shortly—beautiful prayers.

Iavis, the War Chief, then arose and read in Matthew xvi. 13-28. He spoke chiefly on "What shall a man be profited, if he shall gain the whole world and forfeit his life?" He spoke very earnestly to the people and exhorted them to be more faithful—

"You think that your plantations, crowds of pigs, and money will help you to get to heaven, that they will open the door for you. It is a big mistake. Unless you give your hearts, and every bit of them to Jesus, you won't get there. The road to hell is easy, it is big enough for all your goods, and you will notice that there is no key mentioned for the door of hell, the door is loose I warn you that unless you become better, and give your whole hearts to Jesus, and give up these earthly things, you cannot get into the narrow road for heaven. We are all worshipping here today. Looking at us, no one can tell who the real Worshippers are. The outward signs are all much alike. But when the harvest day comes, we shall be like the wheat and the tares. And what became of the tares? They were burned in the fire. Friends, if you don't take heed in time, you will be too late. Your hearts are too full of earthly things, and unless you put them out of your hearts, you cannot give your hearts to Jesus. He wants the whole of them."

Then he told them about four boats out fishing,

"It was a beautiful calm day, but suddenly those on the shore saw a storm coming, and they blew the shell for the boats to return. Three gave heed to the signal and came in. The people in the fourth boat said, 'Oh, there is plenty of time, and the fish are biting so well now, we will wait a little longer.' By the time they had decided to come in, the storm had burst and it was too late. Next morning, bits of broken boat were found along the reef. The crew had all perished in the night."

So Iavis besought the people to turn before it was too late. He closed by reminding them that the time was now near when their Misi would leave them, and that their hearts were all sore. "But," he said, "let us show our love to our Misi by being better Christians. Don't let us be like the Israelites who fell away so often, but let us worship God strong, and let us take the right road. And if we cannot see our Misi again on this earth, we shall all meet before the face of God."

Lomai closed with a beautiful prayer.

And it cheered me, on my bed of sickness, to hear how our people loved us and prayed for us. A day or two later, Mr Macmillan came overland from Weasisi to say that the steamer would be here in a few hours. We were grateful to him for this last of many acts of loving thoughtfulness. Our people came around the house in silence and

amid many tears, as we sadly made our last preparations.

Then the steamer came, and we gathered for the last time in the Church which had become so dear to us. I gave out a hymn which no one sang. Mrs Paton played it on the organ, but the only response from our people was a passionate sobbing! Then, in one or two broken prayers, we commended each other to our God.

In the gathering dark, we boarded our good old *Pioneer*. Tausi remained on shore, but laying his head on the stern he sobbed as if his heart would break. Lomai and Iavis and Titonga pulled us out to the ship. It was a dreadful parting from our people. Then came the final good-bye on board the ship. Our beloved Lomai was the last to say farewell. Death would have been easier than that terrible wrench.

Then the *Pioneer* pulled away into the darkness, and the last sound we heard was Lomai's sorrowful voice coming to us across the waters, "Imam, Misi Paton! Imam, Misis Paton!"

Then the anchor was heaved up, and the engines began to throb, and we slowly steamed away from our home and our people—away into the unknown future, at God's command. We watched the light in our home, till it faded into the darkness, and then we went below to battle through the sorest night in all our life.

We may travel far afield in the providence of God, but we shall never meet with nobler or more Christlike men than Lomai and his brave fellow-teachers. They are heroes, every one of them, God's Heroes.



APPENDIX

“THE JOHN G. PATON MISSION FUND”

BY THE HON. TREASURER

SHORTLY after the publication of the Autobiography in 1889, free-will offerings poured in on the Author, and on myself, from all classes of readers in almost every quarter of the world,—eager to assist in carrying the Gospel to those Tribes and Islands on the New Hebrides that were still Cannibal and Heathen. These sums were, by request of the donors, directly entrusted to the Venerable Missionary himself, who gladly allocated them towards that sacred purpose.

But, within a year or little more, the Fund had so grown, and God had raised up and had Himself called into the field such a helper and organiser in the person of our beloved friend, Mr Albert K. Langridge—now the well-known Hon. Secy.—that a Mission Trust Fund had to be properly instituted, and an official Committee

made responsible. This was carried through at the desire, and with the personal sanction of Dr John G. Paton himself; and he, so long as God spares him at our head, is the Director of this Branch of the New Hebrides Mission work, without whose approval the Committee have done nothing.

Mr Langridge, with a genius for organising, set himself to develop the Scheme. *First* came his *Lantern Lectures*, with a splendid set of illustrative Slides. Then followed, in view of John G. Paton's visit to this Country, the launching of *Quarterly Jottings*, which Mr Langridge continues to edit, and which is now the visible bond of union betwixt us, our fellow-helpers everywhere, and the Islands afar. By and bye, as the Fund still prospered steadily, there dawned the audacious proposal to have at least *one* Missionary, "our own," entirely supported by the Fund! But God took the matter in hand, and this year (1903) we find ourselves maintaining *five* Missionaries on the New Hebrides, and full of confidence that we shall never have need to have a smaller staff, till every Tribe on the Islands has been won for Christ.

Other helpers have rallied around us—particularly our devoted friends, Mr Wm. Watson of Belfast, Hon. Secy. for Ireland, and Mr R. M. B. Colquhoun of Glasgow, Hon. Secy. for Scotland, with a host of willing assistants in many corners of the United Kingdom, and in many other Lands. When we meet, at long intervals, and consider how greatly blessed has been the Organisation that sprang from so small a seed, we can but look into each others' faces, and gratefully exclaim—Behold, how great things GOD hath wrought!

We are now responsible for the following objects; and all friends of the New Hebrides may help in one or other of the undernoted Schemes:—

WAYS OF HELPING.

I. "Shares" may be taken through "Our Own Missionary Fund" for the support of any one or more of our Five Missionaries. A Share is £6. The ordinary Salary for a Missionary is £200 per annum—exclusive of special "Allowances." So that thirty-five

Families, or Subscribers, combining, may have their own "Missionary Substitute" on the New Hebrides. Our General Fund would meet all the extras, for Outfit, Boat, House, Transit, and the like.

2. In addition to these fully qualified Missionaries (all, either Ministers or Doctors), the Fund is paying the Salary (£150 per annum) of the "Assistant Master" at the Training Institute on Tongoa; and is also supporting two "Lay Helpers," Industrial Evangelists from home, at a Salary of £100 each per annum (£25 extra when married). Generous donors provide the Salaries of the two latter, but the former, the Assistant Master, has so far had to be maintained out of the General Fund.

3. A Native Teacher or Evangelist begins at £6 per annum, and may by service rise to £8 (according to a recent regulation). You may have, therefore, a Native Evangelist working as your "Missionary Substitute" on the New Hebrides, by the payment of this sum every year. We have not changed from the Salary of £6, with which this Scheme was started; but, we pay the balance, when required, for experienced Agents, out of our "Native Teachers' Fund"—portion of which is left free by the donors for our allocation. One of the Missionaries acts as our Hon. Treasurer, and disburses the money for us, at the sight and with the approval of the Synod on the Islands.

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